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# THE STORY OF INDIAN MUSIC

THE STORY  
OF  
INDIAN MUSIC

*Its Growth and Synthesis*

by  
O. G O S V A M I



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*To My Grandparents*

SHRI HARIDAS GOSWAMI  
and  
SHRIMATI SAILA BALA DEVI

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Sitar . Rabab . Sursringar

Sarangi . Dilruba

Shehnai . Bansari

Pakhawaj or Mridang . Tabla-Bayan

South Indian Tambura . North Indian Tambura

Saraswati Veena . North Indian Veena

Sarod

## Foreword

WITH THE advent of freedom and the establishment of the status of India in the comity of nations, more and more people, both in India and abroad, have begun to take more than a passing interest in the culture of India. The Indians have become conscious with a sense of pride of their cultural heritage. Undeniably our music is a part, and a very important part, of that cultural heritage. There are today more music concerts, conferences and festivals being held all over the country than ever before. The Centre as well as several States have recognised the necessity of preserving and fostering the development of our music. The formation of the Sangeet Natak Akadami demonstrates this recognition by the Government.

Though it is often said that music, more than any other art, has a universal appeal, this is only partially true. At any rate the classical music of India, whether it be of the Hindustani or the northern school or the Carnatic or the southern school, has always been a cultivated art. Its basis is scientific and its growth has been on organised and systematic lines. There is a rich variety of musical compositions in India, but every type of composition has definite form and features. A full appreciation of Indian music is impossible without some knowledge of its science and technique. It must be confessed that with all the enthusiasm for music that prevails today in our country a knowledge even of its fundamentals is woefully lacking in a large majority of our educated intelligentsia. A few books have been published dealing with Indian music.

But as Prof. Gosvami points out in his Introduction they have been, most of them, either too philosophical and vague or too technical and difficult. This book is an attempt to avoid both these extremes. The learned author has avoided vague generalisation. Nor has he burdened his work with a mass of technical detail. Obviously it is not possible to avoid the use of technical terms so long as the import of these terms is made clear. One cannot write a book on the Atom Bomb even for lay readers without referring to nuclear fission and using terms like Electron and Proton. Likewise, no one can write a book on Indian music without referring to *Shruti*, *Raga*, *Jati*, *Murchana* and other such terms.

This book is also useful to another section of the public, viz., foreigners who are genuinely interested in our music. They have a difficult task in trying to understand the system of music with which they are not familiar, however eager they may be to enjoy its beauties. They require accurate information of the basic principles of Indian music and its peculiar characteristics. Unfortunately many books on Indian music written in English have failed really to be of practical use to the lay foreigners. I believe this book will be of use to them as it is a critical and interesting survey of the growth and synthesis of Indian music.

This book however is not a mere descriptive glossary of Indian music. Nor is it a mere text-book. The learned writer has often dealt critically with some of the aspects of Indian musicology and indicated several questions which demand intensive study. The chapter 'Music Looks Ahead' is thought-provoking.

I have great pleasure in commending this book to the general public in India and abroad who have more than a superficial interest in Indian music.

P. V. Rajamannar  
President

SANGEET NATAKAKADAMI

## Introduction

DURING THE last few years, there has been a growing interest in music among the public. Among the lay people there is today quite a large section which is taking more and more to a serious study of this art.

The feeling is widely prevalent that the music of India, like the magic of her ancient days, is practised and understood only by a small esoteric group. The artiste is still regarded as a strange being who lives in his wide world of imagination, spending his time in practising and demonstrating an unintelligible type of vocal acrobatics or instrumental interlude whose terminology, when explained, becomes more and more incomprehensible.

This book about Indian classical music is addressed to this large section and to the still increasing number of intelligent enthusiasts who frequent innumerable musical soirees and conferences held all over the country and listen to the greatest masters brought to their drawing-rooms by the radio.

There are many books in the market on Indian music which have discussed the theme either too philosophically, or too technically. My purpose in writing this book has been a little different. *Haute vulgarisation* is the term applied by the sagacious French people to that happy result which neither offends by its condescension nor leaves obscure a subject in a mass of technical verbiage. It has been my aim to extend this process of *haute vulgarisation* to those outposts of musical thought which are generally referred to, if at all, only by name—to show how by their very diversity they have served

to preserve and foster the fundamental spirit of unity, how as both Art and Science the musical tradition has continued to lead the creative faculties of human mind and imagination, and how it has through the centuries continued to soothe the restless and bring solace to the weary.

This book has been written with two objectives: first, to enable the uninitiated and the novice in my own country to appreciate their musical heritage. In order to appreciate the best in any art, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the terms which the artiste uses and the spirit in which he uses them. It is also necessary to understand the principles underlying the processes, customs and conventions of the art. Otherwise, it would not be possible fully to comprehend or appreciate the living art. So, in this book, I have explained the terms used by the musicians and have discussed the principles underlying their practices, as no work of art can be truly enjoyed till one experiences that sense of possession which comes from knowing why one enjoys it and how the artiste achieves certain effects upon the human mind and senses.

Secondly, this book has been written for the western readers following the advice of the late Romain Rolland who, while talking to Shri Dilip Kumar Roy of the Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry about our music, said: 'I feel it would be wise to write about the music of your country and tell us about its spirit. Only, do not fight shy of the technicalities; you would do well to explain to us not only the sentiments of your mind in your deepest strata, but also the technique whereby you arrive at the translation of such sentiments. Otherwise we would feel stranded, as it were, on a sort of vague lyricism.'

I hope I have not been too prodigal of information that might be easily available. Those desirous of a general view can pass over the technicalities, though my method has been not to avoid them but to elucidate them in a lively human narrative. The others who are seriously inclined will be helped by the explanations to find their way over the vast expanse of the subject, still inadequately explored, wherein so many



problems will still solicit their studious inquiry for some time to come. I have pointed out a few of the numerous questions still to be studied; any manual giving the impression that our knowledge is complete would be wanting in scientific value.

The facts contained in the book are as old as Indian music, only their interpretation here and there may be a little new. I am deeply indebted to my many friends, both scholars and musicians, who have discussed with me the various points of the subject-matter whenever I was at a dead-end, thus enabling me to see light in the hazy maze. I am also grateful to many authors whom I have quoted knowingly or unknowingly. After Partition I had to leave Pakistan post-haste for India for safety leaving behind much of the material from which I have quoted and as such I now find myself helpless to acknowledge them at certain places.

Lastly, I shall fail in my duty if I do not offer my sincere gratefulness to my teachers who have trained me not only in the practice of music but also in its theoretical aspects. They are the late Shri Girija Shankar Chakraborty of Calcutta, a musician the like of whom India will not see again; the late Ustad Karamat Khan of Jaipur, the last of our titans of the *Dhrupad* style of singing; the late Pandit Beni Madhav Misra of Banaras, whose knowledge of *Dhamar* was unique; the late Shri Karim Hussain, famous *Tappa* and *Khayal* singer of Jaipur; Firdosi Bai and Nanhilai of Jaipur and Bari Moti Bai of Banaras, once eminent singers of *Thumri* and *Khayal*; Shri Tarapada Chakraborty who taught me to distinguish and appreciate various styles of music. Last but not the least, I am very much indebted to Shri Birendra Kishore Roy Choudhry, the scholar-musician of Bengal who, whenever I was in difficulty, helped me by tendering sound advice from his fund of knowledge, thus clearing my doubts and helping me to solve many ticklish points in Indian music.

A K I N G once approached a Sage and asked to be taught the craft of image-making. The following dialogue ensued:

K I N G : O Sinless One! Be good enough to teach me the methods of image-making.

S A G E : One who does not know the laws of painting can never understand the laws of image-making.

K I N G : Be then good enough, O Sage, to teach me the laws of painting.

S A G E : But it is difficult to understand the laws of painting without any knowledge of the technique of dancing.

K I N G : Kindly instruct me then in the art of dancing.

S A G E : This is difficult to understand without a thorough knowledge of instrumental music.

K I N G : Teach me then, O Sage, the laws of instrumental music.

S A G E : But the laws of instrumental music cannot be learned without a deep knowledge of the art of vocal music.

K I N G : If vocal music be the source of all arts, reveal to me, then, O Sage, the laws of vocal music.

*Vishnudharmottara*

All Art aspires to the condition of music.

*Schopenhauer*

## 1. Music Is Born

TO TRACE the origin of music one has to take the forgotten meanderings of ancient chronicles and walk far back into the times when the new mankind was casting aside its animality and was beginning to struggle towards an unknown but fuller and richer life. Thus in the story of music is recorded the progress of human thought and the widening of man's imagination. As we go back we find it opening a fascinating perspective down the corridors of time.

Music began with singing. Man, in his attempt to give an orderly shape to his voice, discovered two opposite and different ways of expression.

Starting from cries denoting alarm, passion, pain and joy, the human vocal chord gradually learnt to produce imitative sounds which were mechanical in the beginning. This process and the later development of 'the vocal acts originally involved the intellectual correlation of behaviour just as any other physiological processes. During the whole course of meaningless vocal chatter, vocal processes gradually accumulated intensity and dominance in behaviour. . . . Specific vocables became dominant foci of fixed reactions to various situations and the instrument of social adjustments',<sup>1</sup> which may be termed the speech impulses of man in the growing. From here the outpost of full-fledged language was not far off.

The mute man, as he gradually began to articulate vocal sounds, soon found that like drum beats or claps they could also be used to draw attention or articulate rhythm. With experience he found that by the force of a change of pitch in

the vocal sounds some of them could not only be made to stand out from the others but could also be made more variable.

Even before the languages fully developed, the people did sing or rather they found some note or notes to put them right on the road to sing-song music in which their impulses found expression through the voice. Once the vocables were found the primitive voice leapt 'noisily up to the top and staggered to the bottom in wild rambling cataracts of shouts and wails' consisting of fierce discharges and tension. This was called pathogenic or passion-born method.<sup>2</sup>

Side by side with this, another process was developing among the peoples who had mastered the elements of a somewhat rudimentary language. A short, silly text was set to a tune alternating between two notes which could be at any distance from each other and varying with the people and tribe but 'constant among the same piece and usually also within all tunes of the same tribe'. This was known as logogenic or word-born music.<sup>3</sup>

Both systems helped the primitives in the acquisition of knowledge of definite intervals by the application of which they, in the long run, were to discover the other notes which later laid the foundations of the musical scale.

A long time elapsed before Man, in his childhood, could be familiar with the tonal quality of vocables; this was followed by another long period before fixed forms could crystallise to become elements for musical minds which were gradually appropriated to form the nucleus of tonal ideas. These tonal ideas did not enter music by themselves but were transformed into characteristic motifs: intervals, rhythms and hummings which were inspired by the sounds heard in Nature. But only those auditory experiences which had musical possibilities and could be varied, altered, developed, syncopated, pruned and whose emotional value could be changed through melodic and harmonic modifications appealed to the early thinking beings of our earth.

It is worth while to remember here that unlike all other art forms music had one great disadvantage; that is, it had

few natural models. The early pictures had visual forms, the dances had the natural actions to draw from and poetry had stories. All the other arts were either copies or imitations, but music could hardly find any configuration in Nature which could suggest to it any organised tonal structure. Music had, therefore, to look to two non-musical materials, rhythms and words, for indirect support.

Rhythms have more stability and definiteness than intonations. And perhaps for this reason the rhythmic structure is the first aspect of music on which it formalises itself and makes itself precise. It can simultaneously be expressed in a variety of ways—in shouts, steps, claps, bodily motions etc.—thus allowing words and all other types of vocal and physical activities to synchronise in one single rhythm. For this reason alone even when it is rendered in a variety of modes the rhythmic figure can easily be observed. Obviously it is, therefore, one and the same metric pattern—a general dynamic form which may be sung, danced to and played on instruments—making it feasible for the elements to be repeated which enable them to be preserved traditionally. Naturally this is the frame, the skeleton, of the embryonic art of music in which the adjustment of speech impulses to the needs of rhythmic<sup>4</sup> tonal figures helped to lay the foundation of later chantings which is the beginning of vocal music everywhere.<sup>5</sup>

Now for the development of music we must go to the very roots of religion as, like all other arts, music has had much to do with religious fervour which ‘has always been one of the principal sources of artistic inspiration and has provided the creative force of artistic productivity’<sup>6</sup> all over the world.

The earliest chants we know of are the Rig Vedic hymns, which were composed in India by the early Aryan settlers who made the Land of the Five Rivers their home. The dates assigned to these compositions vary from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C.

The Rig Vedic chants were simple in form and exclamatory in nature. As they were sung on one note, this hymnal period has been called *Archika*. The note on which it centred was called *Udatta* or ‘raised’. Because of the use of one note the delivery was more like reciting than singing, a kind of dry

sing-song without any melodic life or character. Though they have been called poetry, in analysing them we find in a good many an absence of the usual regulations in respect of duration and length of syllables, lines and rhythm that are usually associated with poetry. The poetical content and emotions were also rather weak and this rendered these hymns mere exclamations in which the noise of the individual syllables spoilt their possible over-all musical effect.

To counteract the hard sounds and restore a sense of ease cadences came to be used by and by, sometimes consciously and often unconsciously. Sanskrit being a language of frequently-recurring compound consonants, the vowels were lengthened primarily to make the syllables clear and audible, and secondarily to reduce the harshness of speech to a minimum. From experience it was also found that the suitable use of cadence gave the hearers a pleasurable feeling. Gradually the spoken language of the early Aryans began to undergo a change and soon the laws of rhythm were developed by 'the happy sequence of the long and short vowels occurring in words'.

It was also realised that in the ordinary speech a certain level or pitch was maintained, except where a word or two needed emphasis, or when a sentence or a part of it ended. Thus it came to be felt that the voice generally fell from the middle pitch by a fourth in closing an affirmative sentence, while in a sentence of an interrogative nature it was found to rise by a fifth.

Taking their cue from the rise and fall in voice of the day-to-day speech, the early Aryans must have begun to chant the words of the texts to a fluid rise and fall of the voice. Thus the early singing came to pivot around the two notes, *Udatta* and *Anudatta* (not raised), which represent the two main pitches of the speaking voice. This period has been called the *Gatha*<sup>7</sup> period of Vedic singing.

At these religious services with the so-called singing in the vast, dimly-lit forest hamlets in which perhaps all were performers and no audiences this stimulus must have provided an occasional experiencing of beauty, which contrasted strongly with the drabness of the daily life of the common

people, which was spent mostly in warring against the indigenous people or in fighting Nature in order to snatch food for the growing population. So the singing of 'the glory of gods' who helped them to win battles or gave them bountiful crops was a powerful artistic impulse for the growth of music in the early times.

The next important stage is Saman, or the Period of Tune, which saw the composition of Sama Veda from which Indian music derives its source. Much of its text was borrowed from the Rig Veda and was either altered or expanded to give it a better poetic sense to facilitate its singing by the 'employment of the quasi-musical noises'.

The study of the evolution of religion reveals to us that the use of music in religious rites and ceremonies all over the world was not only common but necessary. The reason is obvious. By music alone could such rites, ceremonies and worships be amplified and prolonged; and by music alone could a certain feeling be aroused and sustained in a great crowd of people. Moreover, the early religious services were conducted in classical Sanskrit and often they were long. Though the congregation had a fair notion of what was going on during the services, it was quite possible that it was not able to follow all the details, and at times the proceedings must have been rather wearisome. So, in order to keep their flock interested, the early priests sought to please both the eye and the ear by introducing singing and dancing.

In course of time an interval between *Udatta* and *Anudatta* was established. Known as *Svarita* (sounded) it was a balancing note between the other two. 'It is nothing but a combination of the notes of *Udatta* and *Anudatta*, and its first half, *Mora*, is *Udatta*...' This period of Vedic music is known as the Samik<sup>9</sup> period.

The evolution of the musical tetrachord is based on certain universal musical facts. 'The musical ear in search of a note does two things. It creeps up or down, one step at a time, and makes a bold plunge for the nearest consonant note from the note which has been sounded. The voice has a tendency to ascend by leaps and to descend by steps. In making a leap to

the next consonant note, the choice really lies between the third and the fourth as the fifth is far away.<sup>10</sup>

In the beginning *Udatta*, *Anudatta* and *Svarita* were three distinct notes. According to Panini, the ancient grammarian (3rd Century), a syllable spoken in a higher tone was *Udatta*, one pronounced in a deeper tone was *Anudatta*, and the joining or the intermediate one was *Svarita*.

There has been not a little controversy about the actual notes used in early Saman singing. The subject of Vedic music remains even now a matter of controversy, as much for lack of evidence as for its extreme and baffling obscurity. The obstacles in the way of its clarity are: first, the lack of ancient works; and secondly, the great difference between the various styles of singing prevalent in the country.

Now let us examine the earliest possible note equivalent to *Udatta*, *Anudatta* and *Svarita*. Many of our ancient musical texts referred to *Madyama* (F) as *Svayambhu* (self-emanated) and as *Avinashi* (unextinguishable), and this note was equated with the *Udatta*. Then came into use the other two notes, *Pa* (G) and *Sa* (C), called *Anudatta* and *Svarita* respectively and also accepted as *Swayambhu Swaras*. But certain other writers accepted G-R-S as the early notes and some others preferred R-S-P and still others insisted on N-S-R, but none of these schools of thought has had much support from scholars.

Even according to Tantric interpretation we find the evolutionary process of musical notes very much similar to that of the Vedic deities. According to Vedic cosmology, *Varuna* or *Akasa* (sky) is the first deity in Creation. In the Tantric age the Vedic deities revealed themselves in the guise of *Varna Bijas* (sound forms). The *Varna Bijas* were equated with *Varna Pratimas* (colour forms) out of which, later, were created the *Murti Pratimas* (image forms). The *Varna Bija* of *Varuna* or *Akasa* is *Madhyam* and so the *Madhyama* can be taken as the earliest note.

The next deity in the Aryan mythology is *Mitra* (Sun) whose *Varna Bija* is *Pancham* (G). And thus *Panchama* can be equated with *Anudatta*.<sup>11</sup> In the next stage of evolution



of the deities we have *Prithvi* (the earth); and its *Varna Bija* is *Shadaja*.<sup>12</sup>

Thus we find that the ancients were fully aware of the tonal unity of the notes, *Ma* (F)-above and *Pa* (G)-below.

After the discovery of the three musical notes our ancestors realised the high degree of consonance which *Udatta*-above and *Anudatta*-below had with the fundamental note. As they went up from *Udatta* at much lesser intervals than from *Svarita* to *Udatta* they found the *Anudatta* repeating. They also found *Udatta* to repeat below *Anudatta* at the same intervals. And thus they came to appreciate and determine the accuracy of the interval between *Udatta* and *Anudatta* which they called *Antara* or the difference between the two notes.

The application of the newly-found intervals between these notes must have helped our ancestors to complete the scale. The basic note with *Udatta*-above and *Svarita*-below was accepted and the other notes were derived in the following manner. A descent was made from *Udatta*-above to *Svarita* to the same extent as one did to ascend from *Anudatta* to *Udatta*. To do this correctly *Udatta* had to be regarded as *Anudatta* and a note that had to be *Udatta* to it was pronounced. In the next stage from *Svarita* an ascent was made to the same extent as one did to descend from *Udatta* to *Anudatta* and in this process two other notes were discovered. They were named *Dvitiya* and *Tritiya* respectively, because according to their position in the scale they came to occupy the second and third places respectively between *Udatta* and *Svarita*. The same process was repeated in the lower compass by descending from *Svarita* and ascending from *Anudatta* by the same measure of interval, and this gave two other notes which were named *Mandra* and *Atisvarya* respectively. It must be remembered that the basic note of *Shadaja* was then in the centre of the scale. *Prathama* was the upper limit and *Krusta* the lower. It was only possible to discover the seven notes with the help of the interval between *Udatta* and *Anudatta* and this interval later came to be known as the *Chatushruti* interval.

The completion of the scale is very fascinating. When a

single note is sounded 'it is an indeterminate like a noun without a predicate. Add to it another note, but a structured tone, it is a unified complex. Add a fifth of the triad, not only is the complexity increased, but there is a structure complete by itself, a subject, a predicate, and an adjective qualifying the predicate. . . . It seems to yearn for something. Its activity suggests a movement forward, a desire to expand itself into a complex one. And yet another and even the complex seems incomplete. It demands the conclusion of the emotional tale started by a single note.'<sup>13</sup>

The Vedic scale was a downward scale and the notes were arranged thus:

Modern names	P	D	N	S	<sup>•</sup> R	G	M
	7	5	6	4	3	2	1
Vedic note names	<i>Krusta</i>	<i>Mandra</i>	<i>Atisvarya</i>	<i>Chaturth</i>	<i>Tritiya</i>	<i>Dvitiya</i>	<i>Prathama</i>
Nos. according to the stages of evolution	2	7	6	3	5	4	1

Later, the names of some of the notes were slightly changed and they came to be called *Prathama* (*Udatta*), *Dvitiya* (*Ga*), *Tritiya* (*Re*), *Chaturtha* (*Svarita*), *Panchama* (*Dha*), *Atisvarya* or *Sashta* (*Ni*) and *Krusta* or *Antya* (*Pa*) according to their respective places in the scale.

These changes in the names were made for the sake of simplicity and appropriateness; for example, *Mandra* was found a misnomer compared to the preceding note as it stood fifth in succession, and it came to be called *Panchama*.

With the discovery of musical scales and poetic metres, the hitherto exclamatory Vedic prayers underwent a great change. While the need for singing aloud was felt for some resonants and sustained vowel sounds, our ancestors could not perhaps help singing syllables, and their suggestion of words gave an opportunity for poetic expressions which could hardly be passed over. This led them to infuse a poetic sense into the singing lines which was another milestone towards the creation

of a new artistic sense in music. The prose or, rather the prosaic poetry of Rig Veda was soon recast and attuned to the new-found sense of poetry which determined a new elementary form, the musical phrase. Here 'the patterns of pitch followed patterns of word-emphasis and melodic lines began and ended with propositional lines', thus discovering another extraneous model for the musical form which invested Vedic singing with a new charm and beauty.

Other subtle changes were at work too. Gradually the stringed instruments were discovered and they were coming into use as accompaniments, and generally 'the history of music is on one side the history of making musical instruments'. While accompanying the voice, though it was difficult for the instruments to keep pace with it, every effort was made to keep the instrument as close as possible to it. Thus the instruments helped to register the notes and define them correctly. With the adoption of the instruments and their use as accompaniments, the singer began to base his melody on the lower notes, as they were louder and clearer on the instrument. Prior to this, the practice was to start with the higher notes and come downwards. This downward scale with an upper tonic and descending order of notes is perhaps common to all early music. Even now it exists in many places among primitive peoples and especially in some Himalayan valleys.

The Saman was a downward scale, as we have seen, but the instrumental scale was an upward one. The clue to the interrelation of these two scales was found in the identification of the *Prathama* of the one with the *Dvitiya* of the other, which was another landmark in musical history.

Later, when the notes used in Samans were studied and analysed, it was found that the intervals between them were 4, 3, 2, 4, 4, 3, 2 successively. In other words, there were four intervals between the fourth and the third, the *Krusta* and the first, the *Atisvarya* and the *Mandra*. The *Dvitiya* and the *Prathama*, and the *Mandra* and the fourth had two each between them. Thus the Saman scale was the same as the *Kanakangi* scale of the present Carnatic music making allowance for the slight changes that have occurred in its form

during the long course of its development. The notes *Sa*, *Ma*, *Pa* of the present Carnatic scale retain the same Vedic interval value.

Not only was the scale completed during the later Saman period, but there was the use of modified notes. The flat modification was known as *Mridutva* and the sharp accentuation as *Tikshnatva*; and as the notes were re-named, the old nomenclature of *Udatta*, *Anudatta* and *Svarita* came to signify three voice registers which in course of time came to be known as *Mandra*, *Madhya* and *Uttama*, meaning low, middle and high octaves respectively.

The perfection of poetical metres gave a new impetus to the growth of the various types of composition and congregational singing gave a new idea of rhythm which, as we know, is spontaneous in all forms of co-operative activities.

'As in all arts, in music, too, there is a sharp distinction between substance and form. The substance of music consists of tones. The form to which these tones are attached is controlled by two different principles both of which are equally indispensable for musical effect—the principles of rhythm and harmony. Musical rhythm, in its simplest form, arises from the production of a tone or a small group of tones at regular intervals of time. Harmony arises from the fixing of a tone of a certain pitch in a perceptible relation to a tone of a definite pitch; on the principle of rhythm they are quantitatively arranged while on the principle of harmony they are qualitative and the rhythm and harmony together form the melody; in other words the melodic form consists of a succession of notes which are rhythmically and harmoniously arranged.'<sup>14</sup> The earlier Rig Vedic hymns were prosaic in nature, but singing laid the foundation of a rhythmic element, since 'any mass movement requires rhythm as its ordering principle. The rhythm is not merely a technical expedient but is something fundamental and rational'.<sup>15</sup>

All the tempos of the rhythm were known in the later Vedic Age with the time duration of the syllables. Instead of the current word *Laya* (rhythm) the word *Vritti* was used.

In the beginning these rhythms had only three time units;

a short note (*Hrasvasvara*) for a qualitatively short syllable, a long note (*Dirgha*) for a quantitatively long one; and the syllables made long by positions were counted as short. Clear-cut rules were laid down for the singing, practising and teaching of Vedic music. 'While singing the body should not move. When practising the music should be sung in fast rhythm, when singing it should be in the medium, but while teaching it the slow speed should be observed,' says an old text.<sup>16</sup> This has value even now for our students and teachers of music.

All the developments that were taking place in the Aryan musical culture were not their own discovery. Others also contributed much to these developments. The early Aryan, as we know him, was a splendid adolescent of the human race who had a new conception of life. Though the aim of the new invaders was to conquer and Aryanise the country, yet they were no blood-thirsty savages. On the contrary, they were an innately gifted race, eager to learn and appreciate the cultural achievements of the pre-Aryan people some of whom were the architects of a fairly high order of civilisation which time had made somewhat obsolescent.

With the conquest of the land and the settling down of the Aryans, many new changes had come to take place in their social structure. Intermixing and intermarrying became more frequent between them and the indigenous people and this brought within the pale of Aryan society many tribes and people with whom also entered many new, queer customs and cultural traits into the Aryan fold. The rapidity with which the conquerors and the conquered fused gave birth to a new civilisation—Indian in outlook in which the fusing elements supplied their own strands and shreds, revitalised by the Aryan spirit and synthesised by the non-Aryan genius.

It has been surmised that the Aryans learnt agriculture from the indigenous people of India. This rise and growth of agriculture in the latter periods of Rig Vedic civilisation led to the adoption by the Aryans of some rites and usages connected with agriculture. In the newly-formed rural hamlets, the neo-Aryans began to develop certain new social and

agricultural festivities apart from the old religious ones. For celebrations connected with sowing and harvesting, child birth and marriages, new forms of music and dances came to be evolved. The indigenous population must have contributed a great deal to these developments, for the Aryans, from their own testimony expressed in a verse of the Atharva Veda, seem to have been rather inferior to the native population in this regard.

In the Rig Veda we come across the words *Dance* and *Danseuse* only twice and this scanty reference to these suggests to us that these arts were neither very much in vogue nor approved of and consequently not well developed. The magnificent picture which Rig Vedic civilisation presents is the result of the incorporation of the arts, crafts and achievements of the pre-Aryan civilisation native to the country and vitalised by a new outlook. The completion of *Rig Veda Samhita* represents the close of a long period of such cultural assimilation in which a considerable number of the bright strands of indigenous cultures got incorporated.

Though much cannot be said definitely about the state of the musical culture of the early Aryans from the scanty resources at our disposal, yet it can be fairly assumed that the Dravidian and other pre-Aryan races of India at the time of the Aryan influx were much superior in respect of the arts. The excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa have revealed beyond doubt the advanced state of civilisation and culture of the pre-Aryans. Moreover, the words *Shilpa* (craft) and *Kala* (fine arts), we are told, are of Dravidian origin and that they entered into the Sanskrit language later.

Even a cursory glance at the early religious texts goes to show that the early Aryans were not very well disposed towards music. To them it was a kind of magic from which, in the beginning, they kept aloof. Moreover, music and dance were mostly associated with the fertility cults of the non-Aryan races. One of these was perhaps the worship of Shishnadeva, whose votaries were much persecuted by the early Aryans. The Vedic texts are replete with the incidents of these persecutions.

Shisnadeva was a phallic deity, and the *phallus* as a god of fertility is found in one way or the other with the agricultural communities all over the world. A common concept in the religion of farming peoples all over the world is that of a female principle or a generative force tied up with productivity. A god or goddess frequently symbolises that belief, since man often invests the process of Nature with his own attributes and motives. In the celebration of the rites associated with fertility, music and dance everywhere play a very important role. In the Lakulish cult of Shiva worship (second century A.D.) singing and dancing occupied a most important place. Some of our anthropologists have gone a step further and have attributed the origin of all music and dance to these fertility cults. This may be correct so far as India is concerned for we find even today that Shiva, a deity of the non-Aryan cults whom the Aryans later adopted as one of their major gods, is installed as Nataraja (King of Dance). The origin of the six primary melodies is also attributed to his five mouths, and one to his consort. This strengthens our belief that Indian music, in the beginning, was associated with the pre-Aryan cult of the phallus, which later developed, under the Aryan influence, into Shiva worship.

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## 2. The Toddler

BESIDES THE *hymnal* or Saman music which centred on three notes there existed *Gana* (song proper) whose relation to the Saman, from the meagre information available, is not clear. All that can be said is that the *Gana* was a collection of songs whose tunes were used in Saman singing. In *Gana* the words of the Vedic verses were split, elongated, repeated, omitted or often changed beyond all recognition.

It is surprising that this 'splitting, dragging, repeating and stopping' of the sacred texts was not considered sacrilegious but, on the contrary, was recognised as necessary for music. Matanga, a later authority on music, clearly states that 'in the singing of the Saman, music should prevail and in the recitation, the meaning',<sup>1</sup> because it was realised by experience that in music the words 'tend to destroy the magic, to desecrate the feelings and thus spoil the most delicate fabrics of the soul'. This has a significance to our present-day critics who desire to subordinate the melody to the words.

There were four types of songs for four different purposes. They were called:

1. *Grama Geya*, i.e. songs sung in hamlets.
2. *Aranya Geya*, i.e. songs sung in forests.
3. *Uha Geya*, i.e. songs of contemplation.
4. *Uhya Geya*, i.e. mystic songs.

Saman music consisted of five parts, *Prastara*, *Udgitha*, *Pratihara*, *Upadrava* and *Nidhana*. These were recognised



even in later days though they were called by different names such as *Alapana*, *Udgraha*, *Melapak* or *Anudgraha*, *Dhruvaka* and *Abhog*.

*Prastara* was a prelude sung by the *Prastota*, i.e. the initiator of the ceremonies. *Udgitha* was the principal theme of the song sung by the *Udgatha*, i.e. the narrator. *Pratihara* was the first response sung by the *Pratihara*, i.e. the second priest. *Upadrava*, or the second response, was sung by the *Udgatha*. *Nidhana* was a closing chorus in which all the people took part.

At different times of the day the different notes were given prominence and this later laid the basis for using the different notes at different times of the day and night in the Indian melodies.

In between the actual singing of the texts, the singer very often resorted to the use of *Stobhas*, or sounds of no particular meaning, viz., *Him*, *A*, *Au*, *Ho*, *Vi*, *Bha* etc., which are about a thousand. These were also called *Phulla* or *Pushpa* (blossoms or flowers) 'suggesting probably that these musical additions to the bare text compared to flowers thrown to the bare twigs.'<sup>2</sup>

The number of notes used in this music differed with the various schools; and there were more of them than is found in the *Rig Veda Samhita*. *Gana* was mostly sung with five notes, but the *Kauthumas* and *Samavidhanas* sang some Samans in seven notes, the *Jaiminyas* in six. The *Taitariyas* sang with four notes while the *Ahvarakas* sang with three.

The music of the Saman and even of *Gana* was of a sacramental character and was closely connected with liturgy, whose central theme was *Soma* sacrifice. The pressing of the *Soma* plant, the extraction of the juice for the gods were all a series of interrelated rituals necessitating attention to minute details. The drink itself was the main item as it was believed that it made the people one with the divinity. The *Samavidhana* tells us that the songs sung at these ceremonies, when done properly, had magical powers. We are also told that at these rituals people roared like the tiger, cackled like the goose, cried like the peacock and cooed like the cuckoo—which reminds us of the totemic clan rituals. Perhaps these

imitations of animal and bird voices afterwards came to be known as *Stovhas*, *Phullas* or *Pushpas*.

In these *Ganas*, for the first time we come across the liturgical melody with real liturgical texts. In them the verses of the Rig Veda found their tonal or Saman form. The same text is sung in different melodies for different purposes. It is very difficult to understand why the words or syllables of the original texts were changed, twisted or dropped in the *Ganas*. Pursuing the question to its logical conclusion, we are confronted with three alternative answers. Among them the question of the chronological relationship between the text and melody calls for our attention. The answer to this may be sought either in the fact that the melodies of the *Ganas* were contemporaneous with the Sama Veda or in that they denoted only the lengthening of the accents of the Rig Veda or the Sama Veda, or in that they were old songs of an entirely different character which were adopted by the *Gana*.

The first suggestion can be very easily dispensed with by re-reading the text. Melodies composed upon text must always keep in touch with it. The inserted syllables can be there for their magical effect, but the original text should remain intact. But as it is not so, it is quite clear that the melodies of the *Gana* were composed neither for the texts of the Saman nor for the Rig Veda.

The second reason also is not convincing for we find the same text sung in different melodies with hardly any melodical relationship between them. Sometimes we find that even the melody and the accent do not agree.

We may, therefore, conclude that these melodies were neither composed explicitly for use in Samans nor were the latter selected to conform to the melodies. They were vamped wholesale and adopted by the Aryans for their edifying ends. What, then, is the source of these melodies and how have they entered into the Aryan musical tradition?

In the history of the music of many nations, we find that songs of a secular nature have often been incorporated into religious music and utilised for religious purposes. For instance, we can take the Messo of the Dutch, the basic motive

of which was purely secular in character. Even some Chopin tunes have been adopted in the religious hymns and we are often confronted with erstwhile popular tunes adopted in religious texts as in the case of Protestant chorals. Sometimes the texts of religious compositions had to be distorted to set them to a peculiar tune.

Now let us see whether in the *Gana* the whole song or a single motif held the field. The evidence is more in favour of the former as the songs happen to possess in many cases a unity but not the motif. Moreover, if a single motif could be taken up and repeated freely whenever found necessary, there could be no occasion to change the text. We are also not yet sure whether the primitives possessed any idea of musical construction. However, it would not be far from the truth if it is said that primitives did not understand the relation of a song to the motif. It would seem that the song was generally taken up as a uniform organism rather than as a piece with a single motif running through it.

It is usually found in the case of all the arts that a special style, which was developed under the influence or pressure of some external circumstances, continues to persist as a mere ornament or conventional feature even when the special conditions disappear. For instance, certain motifs or designs of decoration in architecture which first made their appearance as magical symbols continued and developed as mere decorations even when their original significance was lost. A similar thing might have occurred in the course of changing the Vedic texts in the *Gana*. Originally the texts were twisted and split due to the incongruity of the melody and the text, but later this might have continued merely as a habit.

Thus we find that before borrowing melodies from the rich storehouse of folk music of the land of their conquest the early Aryans depended entirely on their primitive recitals. This incorporation of folk melodies from the various pre-Aryan tribes of India led to a widening of the musical imagination of the Aryans and to the formation of a new type of music which was known in the beginning as *Marga*, or the sought. Later this name was equated with *Gandharva* and

came to mean the same type of music. *Marga* too came to mean 'chaste' or 'classical' after some time, but in the beginning it only meant the music 'which has been sought'.

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### 3. Marga—The Sought

THE ORIGIN of *Marga* is described by our ancient writers as the music 'that was composed by Brahma and others, collecting material from the Vedas, which later was popularised among the people by Bharata and other savants, giving it a proper shape and form'.<sup>1</sup> Kallinatha (15th Century), one of the great authorities on ancient Sanskrit texts, commenting on this, states: '*Marga* is so called because it was searched for (*Margita*) by Brahma and others.'

Another commentator, Simhabhupala (A.D. 1220), has explained the words *Marga* and *Margita* as *Anveshita*, that which has been sought or *Drashta*, that is, which has been seen; both these words can only be used for things that exist. Therefore, it can be taken for granted that following the tradition of Vedic music, Brahma and other musicologists had introduced a little more popular but refined form of music which came to be known as *Margasangeeta*. Kallinatha means exactly the same thing when he says, 'Brahma, the grandfather, extracted music from the Sama Veda.' By *Geeta* or *Gana* Kallinatha means only the Vedic music which he equates with *Marga* music. Stressing this point, he proceeds to say, 'As this music is merely an epitome of the Sama Veda, it is Vedic.'

As against this, there was another type of music prevalent at this time which was called *Deshi* (indigenous).

Another type of music was developing alongside of the chant or liturgy. We all know that the most necessary and natural material through which music expresses itself is the human

voice whose function is spontaneous, natural utterance. As the need was felt the voice acquired the character of rhythmical vocables—which we have already discussed earlier—which in their turn were slowly moving towards shaping themselves into meaningless assonants, thus creating the basic structure which spelt the initiative for the creation of all kinds of primitive occupational and festal songs.

For a long time Song was dependent on Dance and was never dissociated from it because in very early times man's life was dominated by a series of rituals which was then 'a cult act, a genuine sacrifice which was really carried out. Prayers and songs were mere accompaniments and remained a secondary matter',<sup>2</sup> the dance predominating over them because it was believed to possess magical effects. Hence the low level of development in early music everywhere. With the gradual disappearance of ritual dance religion began to lean more and more on verbal expressions which took the form of prayer and liturgy, leaving the secular and festal music to remain as a handmaiden of the dance for some time.

Secular music also gradually began to assert its own independence from the dance-rhythm and, in this process, began to derive its inspiration both from sacred sources and profane forms which led to the creation of a purely independent secular music—the 'airs' which later acquired the names of tribes, places and regions where they originated. These airs gradually separated themselves from all scaffoldings or crutches on which they leaned, thus shaping themselves into a dynamic tonal form and becoming an expressive medium with a life of their own. They soon became a national possession, a rich storehouse, as we shall see later, from which the music of the future was to borrow.

The different regions of the country had thus different types of regional (*Deshi*) music which were sung for the pleasure of the people in general. Regional music has been defined by the ancient texts as music 'sung differently in different regions following the local styles, which did not observe any rules of intervals, scales and melody mould'.<sup>3</sup>

But *Margasangeeta* or *Geeta* is not purely Saman music,

though it was created in that tradition, style and note-structure. Since, however, it was formed either in imitation or in the tradition of Vedic music, it acquired the nobility of the latter.

Moreover, Vedic music was becoming more and more esoteric and an exclusive prerogative of the priestly class, which dominated the social organisation. But the Kshatriyas, who were warriors, also began to assert themselves. The people as a whole were breaking away from the traditional religion and its rites and usages. This had its own repercussions on music. Saman chants, we have already seen, were mostly Rig Vedic verses twisted, pruned or abbreviated to be sung at the time of preparing, offering and drinking the intoxicating *Soma* juice. Soon there arose heretics who made a critical scrutiny of the Saman music forms and, comparing them with *Deshi* music, they found them wanting in melody and charm. One of the Vedic composers himself compares 'the drawling recital of Vedic hymns by the *Rishis* and their disciples in the abodes of learning to the croaking of frogs'<sup>1</sup> and another equates it with the howling of jackals.

Even so early as at the time of the compilation of the *Manu Smriti* (third century A.D.) it seems the Saman music had come to be looked down upon for its non-musicality; we find *Manu*, the great law-giver, disclaiming it for its impure sound.<sup>5</sup>

It was during this time that many compositions known as *Aparantaka*, *Ullopya*, *Madraka* and *Prakari* began to make their appearance in the field of religious music where a vacuum reigned due to the unpopularity of the Vedic music.

These compositions were based on popular tunes with a popular-note-basis and came to be treated as sacred, 'a veritable counterpart of the Vedic Saman created by *Brahma* himself, a faithful rendering of which was for the spiritual benefit'.

*Brahma* here does not indicate the creator of the Universe but the director of Aryan sacrifice who instructed the other priests in the conduct of the ritual and therefore was well versed in the ritualistic practices and the Saman music.

It was one of these mortal *Brahmas* who was the creator

of the Marga music and who later was mistakenly identified with Brahma, one of the Trinity of the Hindu mythology.

In course of time Vedic music became so unpopular that the people even forgot the Vedic note-names; naturally the note-names of folk music came to be applied to the notes of Marga music.

If we accept *Margasangeeta* as Vedic music, it becomes difficult to understand why the note-names of Vedic music or the music even created in the tradition of the Saman should be invested with the note-names of folk songs. The only reasonable answer that can be given is that, though Vedic music was having a parallel existence along with the regional (*Deshi*) music, by the rigidity of its rules and conventions it had become already the preserve of an esoteric priestly class, thus alienating itself from the rest of the people who gradually forgot the note-names. On the other hand, folk music on account of its living touch with the people, began to gain in popularity. The scholars of the period took up folk music and began to refine it to suit the taste of the cultured classes. As a result of this, folk music emerged as *Margasangeeta*; that is, refined or classical music having popular note-names. Narada was the first man who identified the Vedic notes with that of folk music, stating that 'the seven notes of the Saman are called *Prathama*, *Dvitiya*, *Tritiya*, *Chaturtha*, *Panchama*, *Mandra* and *Atisvarya* or *Krusta*. These are *Madhyama*, *Gandhara*, *Rishabha*, *Shadaja*, *Dhaivata*, *Nishada* and *Panchama* of the folk music.' But to maintain their sanctity, perhaps, he endowed these with *Vakra Gati*, or oblique movement.

As to the sources of the notes used in Indian music the ancient texts inform us that they are the imitations of the sounds uttered by different birds and animals.

'*Shadaja* is sounded by the peacock and *Rishabha* by Chataka (lark). The goat bleats *Gandhara* (minor third) and the heron cries *Madhyama* (perfect fourth). In the season of flowers the *Panchama* (perfect fifth) is sung by the cuckoo. *Dhaivata* (natural sixth) is croaked by a frog in the rainy season. *Nishada* (minor seventh) at all times is trumpeted by the elephant.'<sup>6</sup>



This idea flavours of totemism. The pre-Aryan people of India, when they found the cries and calls of some animals and birds suitable for their music, imitated them and gave them place in their evolving musical scale. This was very natural since 'as the painter imitates the forms and colours from Nature, so does the musician imitate the notes, accents, volume and modulations of the various voices—in short, all the tones through which Nature herself expressed the feelings of passion'.<sup>7</sup>

In the later Sanskrit texts, however, we find Chataka substituted by the bull, as in course of time the latter, the pre-Aryan symbol of fertility, came to be regarded as sacred because it was the pet of Shiva. Thus it seems that at this period of cultural synthesis of pre-Aryan and Aryan elements, the Aryans borrowed the history of the note origin from the local people and assimilated it into the theory of music that was in the making.

Some of the modern scholars have fixed for Narada a date anterior to that of Bharata and Dattila. If this is really so, we find that even at such an early period the Vedic music was at its lowest ebb and folk music at its full tide. By this time *Marga* music had come to establish itself firmly by the side of folk music and was drawing deeply from it. For this reason Narada felt the necessity of establishing and explaining the correspondence between the notes of folk music on the one hand and *Marga* music on the other. As the people had almost come to forget the note-names of the Vedic music, we find Narada always speaking in terms of current note-names and being silent over the Vedic ones; he felt it unnecessary to name them when the people themselves were unaware of them.

In establishing the correspondence between the notes of *Marga* and *Deshi* music, Narada relied on the flute only as the 'oaten music belongs to the world's dawn'. The flute was an important musical instrument of all early peoples and the Aryans as a pastoral tribe surely must have been very familiar with it and used it as a kind of drone long before the tambura came to be assimilated and used for the purpose. Ancient

musical and other texts refer to the flute as an instrument for drone.

With the passage of time a class of people called *Gandharvas* (professional minstrels), who specialised in the *Marga* music, came to the fore and popularised it. Hence it came to be equated with the music of these people and acquired the label *Gandharva*. Kallinatha affirms this when he says, '*Gandharva* is *Marga*, that is classical and sacred and *Gana* is *Deshi*, that is regional or folk music.' Again, according to him, compared to the classical or ritual music *Gana* or the regional music depended for its creation on composers (*Vakgeyakara*) and therefore was considered human in origin. This leads us to believe that the Vedic texts sung in the regional tunes were *Marga* in the beginning and secular compositions sung in the same tune were *Deshi*.

Thus, endowing *Gandharva* music with the nobility of *Marga* music, Kallinatha differentiates it from folk music (*Gana*) which he equates with *Geeta*.

*Gandharva* music is also so-called because it became popular by the efforts of the people of the Gandhara country (modern Kandahar and its outlying regions). The craftsmen from the same region gave India, at a later date, her first sculptural art known as the Gandhara Art; however, their music, perhaps semi-hellenistic or foreign in character, did not survive long like their sculpture, being 'too weak in its new environment to maintain its individuality, yet strong enough to interrupt and enervate' the Indian music that was in the making.

As to the form of *Gandharva* music, Bharata tells us that 'it was based on notes, had time-measures and compositions'. Another point of considerable importance is that, according to Bharata, the *Gandharva* music had its origin in the veena (lyre) and we know that the people of Hellas used the lyre in their music and *vansa* (flute) was the basis of indigenous music. This is the first time that we find the veena and *vansa* placed in the same category; but at the time of Narada only the flute constituted the base and the veena, it would seem, had not yet come to occupy a place of importance.

Thus we arrive at a period when new forms of popular music were being evolved and folk music was making its inroad into the body of Saman music and leading it towards a goal which was pregnant with new aspirations and moods. The verve of the musician which until now was dominated by a religious fervour and candour began to give way under the stress of changes that were taking place in the social, political and economic life of the people and giving rise to novel thoughts and ideas which were adding new meanings and significance to life. The styles of all arts are the product of a social consciousness. Consequently, instead of revolving merely round the ritual liturgy, music began to invade the different spheres of life—communal festivals, the stage which had come into being, the courts of princes and the chambers of ladies—where various forces were producing different kinds of music, prayerful, gay, sophisticated—some appealing to the head and others to the heart.

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## 4. The Prattler

### MICROTONES, NOTES AND SCALES

IN THE PREVIOUS chapter, we have seen how music began with one note and gradually went on discovering other notes which in course of time were incorporated into the musical scale of the country. Before proceeding further, it is necessary to examine certain musical terms and expressions which became current during this revolutionary process and are still in use.

One factor about Indian music that strikes a foreigner is the use of a large number of microtones. There are twenty-two microtones and these form the base on which the edifice of Indian music is built. To most Westerners, they are either incomprehensible or seem a mere elongation of the same note but those whose ears are familiar with the music of the Balkan races or Scottish folk songs will recognise many of them.

A study of the texts on Indian music reveals how the people of ancient India studied the sounds of different pitches thoroughly before formulating the theory of musical sound. Music as an art has much to do with the evocation of joy, sorrow and other moods and the ancient theorists understood this so well that instead of analysing sound purely from the point of view of physical science they laid equal stress on its psychic character too.

Music is essentially subjective and cannot lend itself to mere objective study. So if it is analysed subjectively the objective view is bound to remain incomprehensible.

In studying the sounds of different pitches, the approach has to be made with reference to a normal basic note in the

mind and an investigation into the pitches of the sound has to consider the emotional appeal of these pitches also. This was the approach of the Indian theorists and the Westerners came very near to it when they defined sound as 'sensation'.

While analysing the musical sounds, the ancient scholars first discovered that separate pitches cannot be heard separately unless they have a minimum interval between them. And if the intervals were shorter than the required minimum, the result was discordance or beat.

They further discovered that when the successive pitches having this minimum interval were counted they numbered twenty-two in an octave. These individual pitches between every two notes were given technical names indicative of the emotions they expressed.

The Indian word for this smaller unit is *Shruti*. It has its origin in the root-word *Shru*, meaning hearing, to which has been added the feminine suffix *Ktin*. It has been defined as 'a note of minute pitch which the ear is capable of hearing'.

These notes were again grouped, according to the quality of the emotion they engendered, under five heads: viz., *Deepta* (sharp), *Ayata* (elongated), *Karuna* (plaintive), *Mridu* (soft) and *Madhya* (middling) etc.

The word *Svara* (tone), on the contrary, has been defined in the ancient texts as 'the sound that generates an expression'. The nearest approach to the word *Svara* in English is note plus something which we shall discuss later. The word *Svara* is traced to the word *Rajri* (to shine) to which has been added the prefix *Sva* denoting *self*. The word thus means 'that which shines by itself'.

These ancient theoreticians recognised that a tone to have the inalienable quality of pleasing must possess 'the ebb and flow of the sound of a bell or of a sounding string'. Thus, according to them, a tone in its structure is 'not uniform either in volume or in pitch throughout its length' and is, therefore, composite and complex in character.

To define *Svara* and *Shruti* and explain their relationship to each other, a good deal of ingenious logic has been used by Indian theorists. The *Svara* has been defined as 'a smooth,

charming and continuous sound originating after the *Shruti* which pleases the listener by its own virtue'. Simhabhupala has commented on this elaborately. He says that some people are inclined to believe that there is no essential difference between *Svara* and *Shruti*, because both of them are capable of being heard. But he argues that this is correct only to some extent. *Svaras* are 'components of *Shrutis* as the clay is of a jar; *Svaras* are the transformations of *Shrutis* as the curd is of milk'. All these examples are given by Simhabhupala to show that though the *Svaras* assume their various forms by a combination of *Shrutis* yet they are distinct from microtones or *Shrutis*.

The difference between *Shrutis* and *Svaras* is thus very subtle, the former being the measure and the latter the thing measured. A microtone is to the tone what an inch is to the foot or a minute to the hour.

Kallinatha, too, has commented on the difference between the *Shruti* and *Svara*. According to him the *Shrutis* are so called because of their audibility, and they are only of one kind because they belong to one type of natural phenomenon. This is perhaps the most intelligent explanation of the subject.

We have already seen how the instruments helped to register the notes and to define them. It was noted early that the third note obtained from the voice is slightly sharper than the third note obtained on an instrument, i.e., eight *Shrutis* against seven. This difference of one *Shruti*, according to Bharata and others, is called *Pramana* or *Parimana Shruti*.

According to the other Indian theorists musical sounds are first perceived as relative pitches and intervals and when they have lasted as such for some time then alone are they able to communicate to the mind any idea or expression. Therefore, the classifications of sound as intervals are considered prior to, and the basis of, the musical classification as *Svaras*.

Matanga says, '*Shadaja* and other notes are always manifested through the interval they form with the tonic just as a pitcher is made manifest in the dark by a lamp.' Another text expresses it more clearly. According to it 'the sound is first heard as an interval, but the resonance that follows it

immediately conveys an expression to the mind of the listener which is known as *Svara*'. In trying to be more precise another text defines *Svara* as 'the expressive sound, attractive and pleasing, which resounds immediately after the exact interval has manifested itself'. Still another text says that the *Svaras* can 'by their own inherent intelligibility and capacity to please the mind appeal to the consciousness of the hearers without any external aid'.

Thus we see that the word *Svara*—to mean only a note at a certain pitch—is a misnomer. It actually denotes a pitch of a sound plus expression. This is the *Abhivyakti* view which defines intervals 'by their expressions rather than by numbers'. Indian theorists consider this system to be more accurate and more practical than the others because without any mechanical verification it allows the gifted musician, who alone is expected to take an interest in music, to know immediately the accurate interval from the feeling it evokes.

The Indian theorists found that there were six notes between the basic and its octave. They divided all these into two halves, each having four notes. The interval between each note in the first part was the same as that in the second four notes. It was also found that the basic note was fuller than the next two succeeding ones which were thinner in comparison. They also discovered that the basic note had in its composition the first four pitches of the octave, the second note the next three pitches and the third note the other two pitches. The fourth note, which was found to have a closer relationship with the basic one as compared to the other two notes, was as full as the basic note itself. To be precise, it was found that the basic and the fourth were full tones while the second and third were semitones varying slightly in length.

The present-day basic scale of north India corresponds with the C major scale of the West with a slight difference in the fifth and the sixth intervals, as follows:

NORTH INDIAN	4 3 3 4 4 3 2
C MAJOR	4 3 3 4 3 4 2

In the Indian system the intervals between different notes are unequally tempered, whereas in the West they are equally tempered.

The scale is a progression of musical sounds ascending by steps and descending by degrees from any note to its octave according to the fixed arrangement of the tones based on microtones, or intervals as they are called popularly.

Though the possible intervals in relation to a given note can be innumerable, yet the numbers that can be used in music have been limited. This limitation has been made possible by the phenomenon known in the science of music as 'consonance'. This arises when the number of vibrations of two or more sounds are related with one another in simple ratios as a result of which the sounds seem to merge, because many of the harmonics which form the upper structure of all sounds coincide. This coincidence, known as consonance, gives to the hearer a pleasing and restful sensation. Nor is this all. Like the shades of a colour or the nuances of a word they too convey to the mind of the listeners distinct and definite impressions.

Though many of our ancient texts have recognised the existence of sixty-six distinct intervals within the compass of an octave, all of which can be distinguished by the ear as distinct steps when played in succession, yet we find them agreed upon the use of only twenty-two in actual practice. These twenty-two are those that represent the simpler ratios with the tonic and convey the most distinct and pleasing effect.

The complete scale of *Shrutis* is not a practical one which can be used with ease in any melody. It is purely an assemblage of different intervals used in different modes (*That* or *Melakarta*) intended to serve as a standard for comparing the different modes. It is also impossible to sing them accurately in succession, but they can all be sung with perfect ease and accuracy when they are embodied in the expressive scales.



These intervals, as we understand them, are actually acoustic divisions which correspond with the expression inherent in them that can be felt by the ear. According to the present practice the microtone develops into a full tone at its last degree whereas in ancient times it was just the reverse. We have twenty-two *Shrutis* distributed between the octave in the order of 4, 3, 2, 4, 4, 3, 2, 2.

TABLE 1

Ancient Note Places	Names of Shrutis	Present Note Names
	<i>Tivra</i>	<i>Shadaja</i>
	<i>Kumudavati</i>	
	<i>Manda</i>	
<i>Shadaja</i>	<i>Chhandovati</i>	
	<i>Dayavati</i>	<i>Rishabha</i>
	<i>Ranjani</i>	
<i>Shuddha Rishabha</i>	<i>Raktika</i>	
	<i>Roudri</i>	<i>Gandhar</i>
<i>Shuddha Gandhara</i>	<i>Krodhi</i>	
	<i>Vajrika</i>	<i>Madhyama</i>
	<i>Prasarini</i>	
	<i>Priti</i>	
<i>Shuddha Madhyama</i>	<i>Marjani</i>	
	<i>Kshiti</i>	<i>Panchama</i>
	<i>Rakta</i>	
	<i>Sandipini</i>	
<i>Shuddha Panchama</i>	<i>Alapini</i>	<i>Dhaivat</i>
	<i>Madanti</i>	
	<i>Rohini</i>	
<i>Shuddha Dhaivata</i>	<i>Ramya</i>	
	<i>Ugra</i>	<i>Nishad</i>
<i>Shuddha Nishada</i>	<i>Kshovini</i>	
	<i>Tivra</i>	<i>Shadaja</i>
	<i>Kumudavati</i>	
	<i>Manda</i>	
<i>Shuddha Shadaja</i>	<i>Chhandovati</i>	

Thus we find each of these intervals is given an appropriate name indicating its character, which we will discuss later. As has already been stated, the intervals were primarily derived for the purpose of fixing the note positions in the scale. The ancient ratios forming the scale were abandoned later for reasons which are unknown. A new scale came into vogue the notes of which were fixed by measuring the danda (staff) of the fretted veena (chala veena). The resultant notes were not much different from the old ones. An ancient text explains the location of the different notes on the veena thus:

'The *Tarashthana Shadaja* (C of the highest octave) is found in the middle point of the veena staff. The centre of the two *Shadajas* is the place of *Madhyama* (F). By dividing the veena staff into three equal parts the *Panchama* (fifth) is obtained. At the mid-point of the *Shadaja* and *Panchama*, the *Gandhara* (E) can be located. In the first half of the distance between the *Shadaja* and the *Panchama*, the *Rishabha* (D) is to be fixed and at the centre of the *Panchama* and the *Shadaja* (second) is located *Dhaivata* (A). Leaving two parts of the distance between *Panchama* and *Shadaja*, the *Nishada* (B) is discovered.'

Indian music now uses the above seven primary notes, viz., *Shadaja*, *Rishabha*, *Gandhara*, *Madhyama*, *Panchama*, *Dhaivata* and *Nishada*. We know the ancients were in quest of such note-names, whose first syllables could be easily pronounced both forward and backward. But how they came finally to be called by these names still remains a mystery. One may, however, hazard a guess from the old *Shruti* names: *Krusta*, from which the B was derived, was called *Nishada* (seated), as its place was fixed. *Prathama* was so named as it was the first and chief note. *Dvitya*, *Tritiya* and *Atisvaryu* later came to be known as *Rishabha*, *Gandhara* and *Dhaivata* respectively.

It is difficult to say why the note-names were called *Shadaja*, *Rishabha*, *Gandhara*, *Madhyama*, *Panchama*, *Dhaivata* and *Nishada*. All our ancient books except *Naradi-Siksha* are silent over this. Some of the reasons given by *Naradi-Siksha* are plausible. It says when a column of air in its course

touches the nose, throat, lung, palate, tongue and teeth and produces a note, it is called *Shadaja* (born of six). When again the air column, starting from the navel, touches the throat and the crown of the head thereby producing a sound similar to the bellowing of a bull it is called *Rishabha* (an abbreviation of *Vrishava* meaning bull). The justification for the rest of the notes is not convincing and is, therefore, omitted here and instead some reasons which are not only plausible but suitable are given for the origin of the names of the rest of the notes. *Gandhara*, as we all know, was the starting note of the Gandharva scale which, being the scale of the higher world, came to be accepted as hallowed and, therefore, the third note of the mundane scale which was similar to the first note of the Gandharva scale came to be called *Gandhara*. *Madhyama*, meaning 'middle' was the one in the middle of the seven notes. So also *Panchama*, meaning fifth, was the note which was fifth in the scale. *Hridayannamalani* is the ancient name for the *Shruti* place or rather the microtonal position of the present *Dhaivata* note. The word *Dhaivata* is perhaps derived from *Dhava* (rogue) indicating a man with a black heart or *Hridayanmalini*.

The abbreviations of these note-names by their first syllables, viz., *Sa*, *Ri*, *Ga*, *Ma*, *Pa*, *Dha*, and *Ni*, made it possible to sing them forward and backward quickly and easily—which thus became the solfa of Indian Music.

The choice of these musical syllables has been most suitable. If we study the intonational structures of the Indian solfa, we find five of them ending with the sound *A* or *Akara* (*A* as in *Army*) and the remaining two in *I* or *Ikara* (*I* as *EE* in *Meet*). Why was this difference in the intonation endings adopted? We are all aware of the fact that the vocal sounds are caused by the vibrations of the vocal chords. Let us also remember that the different kinds of sounds, even when they are of the same pitch, and much more so when of different pitches, need, for the purpose of articulation, different kinds of resonance. An analysis of the sounds leads us to believe that the vowels are the real sounds as they are rich in overtones and vary like the timbre of different instruments,

whereas the consonants are incomplete sounds without the vowels. Among the vowels only *A*, *I*, *E*, *U* (*A* as in *Army*, *I* as in *It*, *E* as in *Everest*, *U* as in *Put*) are primary, the rest being either their derivatives or compounds. Again, among these primary notes, *A* is the most important as the proper and effective articulation of it necessitates the play of the deepest part of the vocal cavities.

The sound cavities, as we know, are not limited to the throat and mouth only. The lungs, the chest and the abdomen also play their part as sound-boxes. If the flexibility of the mouth gives proper shape and form to the sounds, the remaining cavities give the tones depth and richness. The aim of all good vocalists is not only to ensure the proper articulation of the sounds by the proper and correct shaping of the mouth, but also to infuse the sounds with the air contents of the lower cavities. *A* is the deepest of the sounds and hence it is absolutely necessary for the production of this primordial tone (*Nada*) by the aid of the cavities that reach down to the navel. And perhaps for this reason our ancient sages have referred to the navel (*Muladhar*, *Brahma Granthi*) as the source of the primordial tone. By speaking of the chest (*Hridaya*) or the throat (*Kantha*) as the source of the sound, our ancestors meant the ascending pitch or the centre of the resonation. *A* is the bottom-most and *U* the top-most of the vowels. The proper and correct articulation of the latter requires the play of the highest parts of the vocal cavity 'the mouth almost being at the very end where the lips come into play'. The vowel *I* is an intermediate between the two.

While the other solfas tended to end in the vowel *A* in the process of intonation, it was found that *Rishabha* and *Nishada* behaved better if they ended with the vowel *I*. In course of time it was also found that it was only when the notes were blended with the appropriate vowels that the proper pitch could easily and naturally be reached and maintained. Though it is neither impossible nor difficult to intonate the notes with any other vowel—and it is done so often in singing—it must be admitted that *I* blends naturally and easily with *R* and *N*. This will be proved to one's satisfaction if one cares

to hear *R* and *N* sounded on any stringed instrument.

The notes of the Major scale of *C* is known in North Indian music as the *Shuddha* scale. Besides this there are other scales which use a number of modified (*Vikrita*) notes. To the question how a note or notes can be modified, the ancient theorists say that 'when a note deviates from its usual (*Niyata*) place, shifting to any microtone, either upward or downward in the scale, the note is said to be modified.' When the microtonal pitch value of a note is lowered, or rather diminished by one or more *Shrutis*, the note is said to be *Komal* or Flat; likewise, when its microtonal pitch is raised, or rather augmented, it is called *Tivra* or Sharp.

The number of these modified notes differed in the various periods of the musical history of the country. Sarangadeva's *Sangeeta Ratnakara* (1210-1247) mentions twelve modified notes which, together with seven unmodified notes, formed a scale of nineteen. *Svaramela Kalanidhi* of Ramamatya (1550) recognises seven modified notes only and its scale is of fourteen notes inclusive of the seven unmodified notes. The names of some of these notes are different, perhaps due to their currency as such in his part of the country. *Ragvivodha* of Somnatha (1609) also accepts only seven modified notes and its scale also is of fourteen notes inclusive of the seven unmodified notes. *Chaturdandi Prakasika* of Venkatamukhi (1620) and *Sangit Saramrita* of Tulaja (1729-1735) recognise only five modified notes, thus making a scale of twelve notes with the unmodified notes. *Shadaja* and *Panchama* notes are taken, for the first time in this book, as *Achala Svaras*, i.e., unmodifiable notes. It must be remembered that, when we speak of *Shadaja* and *Panchama* as fixed or unchangeable notes, we do not endow any absolute pitch to them but a pitch in relation to the rest of the scale.

*Sangeeta Parijata* of Ahobala (1700) also accepts *Shadaja* and *Panchama* as *Achala Svaras*, and agrees only to the modification of the other five notes, thus making a scale of twelve notes. His modified notes were different from the others and bore such names as were easy to pronounce. They were accepted by the Mohammedan musicians, and this scale

is still current in North Indian music. *Sangeeta Parijata* allows each of the five modifiable notes six degrees of pitches, each different from the others by a *Shruti*. The six degrees are named as *Purva* (Flat), *Komala* (Soft), *Shuddha* (Pure), *Tivra* (Sharp), *Tivratara* (Sharper) and *Tivratama* (Sharpest) successively. The whole gamut is thus divided into twenty-two parts or *Shrutis*.

The *Shuddha Svaras* are the same as those of *Ratnakara* and they are preceded by *Purva* and *Komala* modifications followed by *Tivra*, *Tivratara* and *Tivratama*.

To understand Indian music it is necessary to understand the nature of intervals that the Western people call 'Semitones' and 'Tones'. There are five varieties of semitones and three varieties of tones which can only be grasped when the difference between the major and minor tones and semitones and tones is thoroughly understood. They are classified as under:

<i>Sa</i> to <i>Re</i> <i>Ati Komalatama</i> Small Soft Semitone	63 cents.
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Re</i> <i>Ati Komalatara</i> Soft Semitone	85 ..
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Re</i> <i>Komal</i> Semitone	112 ..
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Re</i> <i>Madhya-tivra</i> Minor Tone	182 ..
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Re</i> <i>Tivra</i> —Major Tone	204 ..

The appellation 'Soft' has been given to the intervals derived from the Seventh Term of the Harmonic Series.

The variation in character differentiates the major from the minor third. There are three minor thirds and three major thirds. Two of the latter are called *ditones* for the sake of convenience. They are:

<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ga</i> <i>Komalatara</i> —soft minor third	267 cents.
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ga</i> <i>Komal</i> —rough minor third	294 ..
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ga</i> <i>Sadharan</i> —rough minor third	316 ..
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ga</i> <i>Tivra</i> —major third	386 ..
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ga</i> <i>Tivratara</i> —ditone	408 ..
<i>Re</i> <i>Komalatara</i> to <i>Ma</i> <i>Komal</i> —soft ditone	435 ..

The order of Consonance of these intervals is 4, 3, 1, 6, 5, 2. The rough minor third is in no way unpleasant and is closer to the true minor third of the piano. Similarly the ditone

is nearest to the tempered major third. It is sweet but a little restless compared to the true major third. The difference between the three minor thirds becomes very apparent in the *Ragas Deshi Todi, Bhimpalasi* or *Sindhura* and *Malkous*.

The most important intervals between *Sa* and *Ma* are:

<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ma Komal</i> fourth	498 cents.
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ma Kaishik</i> false fourth	590    "
<i>Sa</i> to <i>Ma Tivra</i> augmented fourth	590    "

*Ma Tivra* is the fourth but it should be remembered that the interval, however, is named from *Ma Komal* and not from *Ma Tivra*. Other forms of *Ma*, i.e., *Ma Komalatara*, *Ma Kaishik*, *Ma Tartivra*, are sometimes also used in Indian music. The first is a soft semitone above *Ga Tivra* and hence a soft minor third above *Re Tivra*, the second being the true semitone above *Ga Tivratara*. *Ma Tivratara* is a true semitone below *Pa*. *Ma Tivratara* is really *Pa* flat but according to the Indian tradition it is created as part of the fourth degree of the scale. It is found in *Raga Marva* and is very nearly related to *Re Komal*, the distance between the two being an exact fourth. As *Pa* is a fourth from *Re Tivra* so is *Pa Komal* a fourth from *Re Komal*.

The various fifths need not be considered in detail as they are complimentary to the above:

Fifth	702 cents.
False fifth	680    "
Diminished fifth	610    "

The most important thing to remember is that both the true and false fourths and fifths are the most important intervals in music.

The interval between *Tivra Ga* and *Ga Tivratara* and *Komal Madhyama* is a diminished semitone, the interval between *Ma Komal* and *Ma Tivra* being a residual one.

The intervals between the different forms of *Dha* and the fixed note *Sa* are similar to the intervals between *Sa* and *Re*. Of all the intervals formed by the sixth degree of the scale

and *Sa* the only one which has any importance is the major sixth as most of the *Ragas* which use *Dha Tivra* as a *Vadi* use that form which is consonant with the drone *Sa*.

The interval between *Sa* and *Ni* has not much importance in Indian music except the *Tivratara Ni* of *Marva* which is really *Sa* flat. The other varieties of *Ni* have the same relationship to *Pa* as *Ga* has with *Sa*.

Indian music seems strange to the untrained ear because between every two notes there are gradations of tones. In Indian parlance, a note, when it stays on its proper interval, is called *Shuddha* or unmodified one. When such an unmodified note leaves its usual interval either towards its previous or successive interval it becomes a *Vikrit* or modified note. A note can thus have as many modifications as there are intervals between it and its previous and successive intervals give the note different shades as the gradations of colour (*trattato della pittura*).

Thus, a note, when it is one degree higher than the *Shuddha*, is called *Tivra*; when two degrees higher, *Tivratara* (sharper) or *Tarativra*; and when three degrees higher, *Tamativra* (sharpest).

A note, again, when it is one degree lower than its original *Shruti* place, is called *Komal* (flat). When it is two degrees lower, it is called *Ati Komal* (flatter) and when it is three degrees lower, it is called *Shikari* (flattest).

Now the question arises whether all the *Shrutis* are displayed in Indian music. Certainly they are all used by the expert musicians as 'their accurate and expert manipulation makes all the difference between good Indian music and bad, and also between one type of melodic structure (*Raga*) and another'.<sup>1</sup> These manipulations can be compared with the different shades of the same colour that the artist uses in his paintings.

While arranging the notes in a scale many of the notes overlap and are consequently left out. According to *Ahobala*, *Purva*, and *Tivra Rishava* and *Tivratara* and *Tivratama Gandhara*, *Tivra* and *Tivratama Madhyama*, *Purva* and *Tivra Dhaivata* and *Tivratara* and *Tivratama Nishada* are to be left



out in the current music. Thus there are only 12 notes in this scale.

As a result of this twelve-note scale, the *Shuddha* forms of *Rishabha*, *Gandhara*, *Dhaivata* and *Nishada* notes are now sharper than in the old music, due to the first interval of four *Shrutis* being distributed between *Shadaja* and *Rishabha* instead of between *Nishada* and *Shadaja* as in old music, making *Shuddha Rishabha* sharper by a *Shruti*; *Gandhara* by two *Shrutis*; *Dhaivata* by one; and *Nishada* by two. These modified forms are really *Komal Rishabha*, *Gandhara*, *Dhaivata* and *Nishada* at two-*Shruti*-intervals from the next lower *Shuddha* forms of *Shadaja*, *Rishabha*, *Panchama*, *Dhaivata*, respectively, and *Tivra Madhyama* at a two-*Shruti*-interval below *Panchama* and some times at the same interval above *Shuddha Madhyama*. Consequently, these modified notes introduce to Indian music one more interval, i.e., a one-*Shruti*-interval between a modified note and the two main notes between which the modified notes occur.

The players, while trying to perform according to the method of stopping a string at various places (used commonly in the lute tribe of stringed instruments with neck and known as the divisive method), were faced with two neighbouring whole tones which they found difficult to keep differentiated. In tending to exaggerate the differences so found they assimilated the size of the minor whole tone so much to the size of the semitone that once more, in order to avoid too slight a dissimilarity, they equalised the minor tone and semitone to form a three-quarter tone each. This is always dinned into the Western ear as the three-quarter tone in Indian music.

Thus the interval between the main notes are three *Shrutis*, the value of one *Shruti* interval being  $25/24$ ; when the interval is four *Shrutis* its value becomes  $81/80$ . The former is called a Chromatic Semitone in the West and is the interval by which the notes are generally sharpened or flattened as the necessity arises in the Chromatic scales.

It may not be out of place here to say that the word *octave*, meaning a composition of eight, is derived from the double tetrachord theory of the Greeks passed to the Gandharvas by

the Greeks who settled in Gandhara. It is interesting to note that one of the many so-called 'Thata' systems in modern Indian music has accepted the double tetrachord theory, overlooking the fact that the double of one and the same note, *Sa* (the first note), is a categorical as well as ideological blunder.

A close study of Table 1 would reveal to us that, firstly, the number of notes have been gradually diminished to twelve notes as against nineteen notes prevalent at the time of *Sangeeta Ratnakara* and, secondly, there has been a tendency to equalise the intervals between the notes.

It is very difficult to say whether this reduction in the number of notes has been of any advantage when we know that in music the passage from one note to the other is gradual compared to folk music where such passage is made in leaps. So the twelve notes—quite enough for the latter—are rather a handicap to art music.

All music is based on the relation between the sounds and, as these relationships can be worked out differently, it is natural to have different kinds of music prevailing in the different parts of the world, each having its own particular expression. The Indian music is modal and is, therefore, based on the relationship between the successive notes on the one hand and their individual relationship with the permanent, invariable note—the tonic—on the other.

The main peculiarity of modal music is that it exists only on the relation of each note with the tonic, and this relationship determines the positions of the notes in the scale. This relationship with the tonic again determines the expression of each note. It is therefore necessary to listen constantly to the tonic while listening to Indian music. This is why we find the drone constantly being hummed in the background in vocal music and even resorted to when any instrument is played.

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## 5. The Child Grows

IT is very difficult to deal with the music that came into vogue subsequent to *Marga*, as many of the ancient texts detailing it are either not available in full or have passed out of existence leaving behind only their names or a few isolated verses quoted here and there. Another difficulty confronting the student is the identical names of different authors belonging to different periods. It has become exceedingly difficult to fix even their probable dates and assess their respective contributions to the music of the country.

In this book we shall, therefore, only refer to those musical texts which are landmarks in the history of Indian music and have helped successive generations to see light and build up systems more suited to their own times but based on the earlier tradition.

The most important book which gives us some insight, however confusing, into the music which was current in between *Marga* and *Raga* music, is Bharata's *Natya Shastra*, believed to have been composed between the third and fourth century A.D. Though, principally, a book on dramaturgy treating of music only incidentally, it is perhaps the only book which acquaints us with a systematic knowledge of the music prevailing at the period. From this we learn that music had by this time gone beyond the mere liturgical associations and had established itself on a more popular basis, superseding Gandharva music. However, it is to the Gandharvas that we should be grateful for laying the foundations of a musical system which later flowered as the art music of India.

Bharata tells us that the music of his time was sung on the basic scales of the Veena, comprising seven notes. The scale was known as *Grama* because 'as the relatives live together in a village so the notes lived together therein'. It was the base on which a number of melody designs having some common features could be built. According to Bharata, there were two *Gramas* current in his time—*Shadaja Grama*, or the scale of C, and *Madhyama Grama*, or the scale of F. Of the *Shruti* positions of the notes of *Shadaja Grama* Bharata says, 'Rishabha is at a distance of three *Shrutis* from *Shadaja* and *Gandhara* two *Shrutis* from *Rishabha*. *Gandhara* and *Madhyama* have four *Shrutis* between them; and the same is the case with *Madhyama* and *Panchama* on the one hand and *Shadaja* and *Nishada* on the other. *Dhaivata* is at a distance of three *Shrutis* from *Panchama*. From this we can build Bharata's scale of C as below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Sa	Ri	Ga								Ma				Pa				Dha	Ni	

This is similar to the present *Kafi* scale of the north. This scale continued for a long time as the basic scale of the north, but the influence of imported musical instruments from the West about the end of the 18th century forced us to discard it for the present *Shuddha* scale, i.e., the major scale of C.

About the construction of the scale of *Madhyama* or F, Bharata states that 'in the *Madhyama Grama* the *Panchama* or the fifth is to be lowered by one *Shruti*'. As this was not sufficient to clarify the whole issue, he adds, 'the difference of the *Panchama* is the very measure of the *Shrutis* which can be described as a difference either of the softness of accentuation or of expression or of length'. So in the *Madhyama Grama*, *Pa* is constituted by three *Shrutis*, 14th, 15th and 16th, and stays in the 16th while *Dha* is constituted by the four *Shrutis*, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th, staying on the last.

In the *Shadaja Grama* and *Madhyama Grama* there was a dissonance between *Ri* and *Ga* and *Dha* and *Ni*. The musician, while singing *Shadaji Murchana* of *Shadji Grama* making

upward and downward movements, had to pass by *Ri* and *Ga* where he met an intruding dissonance. To avoid it he sometimes raised the staying pitch of *Ri* and *Ga*, thereby weakening *Ga* which was already weak. But as this did not suit his purpose, he raised the staying pitch of *Ga* and thus felt nearer to *Ma*. This new pitch of raised *Ga* has come to be known as *Antara Gandhara* or intervening *E*. Its staying *Shruti* is eleventh and so it is lower than *E*. Similarly, when he raised the staying power of *Ni* to the second *Shruti* which properly belonged to the upper *Sa*, it came to be called *Kakali Ni* meaning a 'somewhat indistinctly sweet *Ni*.' Thus in the *Madhyama Grama*, *Ma* is naturally more important and the note preceding it has to be dealt with more often than the other disturbing note *Ni*. Hence *Antara Gandhara* figures more in the *Madhyama Grama* and *Kakali Ni* in the *Shadaja Grama*. But when the *Gramas* are mixed together to increase the number of *Murchanas* these lively notes were used a little indifferently. Thus, among the two pairs of dissonant notes, namely, *Ri*, *Ga* and *Dha*, *Ni*, the ancient musicians had adopted *Ga* from the first and *Dha* from the second pair respectively. This use of *Dha* is, perhaps, due to the adoption of *Dhaivatadi Murchana* in which the ancients found it easy to allow *Dha* an important place. This use of *Dha* naturally sent its dissonant *Ni* into shade. Similarly *Ri* found an additional consonance in *Pa* of the *Madhyama Grama* and so received all considerations in the melodies emanating from this *Grama*.

According to the above, the distribution of the *Shrutis* in the scale of *F* must be:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<i>Ma</i>					<i>Pa</i>					<i>Dha</i>		<i>Ni</i>				<i>Sa</i>			<i>Ri</i>		<i>Ga</i>

The difference between the two scales of *C* and *F* is very similar to the difference between the two forms of the Dorian modes of Greek music. In the first Dorian mode, which corresponds to our *Shadaja Grama*, the fundamental is tonic and final at the same time, while in the second Dorian, which



The term *Grama* originally meant a heptatonic scale, but with the development of music, it changed its meaning as the musical potentialities of other notes in the octave were realised. It then came to be used in an extended sense to denote a collective scale including within its compass all notes, both modified and unmodified.

In Bharata's time, the word *Raga* was not known. The word *Jati* was used in the modern sense of *Raga*. Though Bharata does not define *Jati*, a reading between the lines of his book makes it quite clear that it had its root in the *Murchana*, derived from the word *Murcha* meaning 'to span'. *Murchana* has been defined as that 'which spans the scale of a mode'. It is also defined as the regular ascent from any note through its seven successive notes and back to the starting one. So from the time of Bharata onwards the term *Murchana* was used to signify the different types of scales from which the modes were derived. There were four main types of such scales. They were obtained by the process of the modal shift of the tonic, i.e., by taking the different notes of the scales each at a time as the tonic. It is worth our while to understand the difference between the scale (*Murchana*) and *Grama* here. The scale differs from the *Grama* proper in having its semitone separated by a false fourth and fifth instead of a true fourth and fifth. From *Sa* to *Ma* is a false fourth, and from *Ma* to *Sa* is a false fifth.

In the *Murchana* the initial note determined the emotional quality of a musical phrase. A *Murchana* had ascent as well as descent. The ascent began at a particular note subserving its corresponding emotion. The descent which began in the seventh note had a different emotional quality. A *Murchana*, therefore, had two different emotional appeals, one in the ascent and another in the descent.

It is now evident that the eighth note is always the first note in the higher octave. So when one has to begin in the higher octave he has to stop at its seventh note in order to make a new start. *Murchana*, therefore, has to stop at the seventh note in an ascending series. This is necessary for maintaining the unity of the emotion, for if one stays at the



other note, say, the fifth, sixth, eighth or ninth, one shall have to begin at the next note which will create different emotions. The same rule holds good for the descending series also. The essence, therefore, of a *Murchana* is that it must stop at the last note of the series of seven notes and then return. A *Murchana* is thus a closed curve formed by the two arcs, viz., the ascent and descent through the seven notes.

The seven *Murchanas* excited seven distinct shades of feeling (*Chaya*) which will be clear if they are sung with a proper stress on their emotional appeal. Both from Hindusthani and Carnatic music many instances can be given of these different colours produced from the same *Murchana*. Take for example the *Bhoopali* and *Deshkar* of Hindusthani music. They are constituted of the same notes. But when you ask a musician what constitutes the difference, he will say the sonant of *Bhoopali* is *E* (*Ga*) and the sub-sonant is *A* (*Dha*) while in *Deshkar* the sonant is *A* (*Dha*) and the sub-sonant is *G* (*Pa*).

In the Carnatic system *Kuranji* and *Navroz* melodies are constituted of the same group of notes. And when you ask the musician about their respective differences, he will say that in *Kuranji* there is no improvisation (*Sanchara*) beyond *B* (*Ni*) of the lower octave and in *Navroz* the improvisation stops at *A* (*Dha*) of the lower octave.

The answers of the musicians of both these systems thus betray a lack of knowledge of the *Murchana* concept as found in the ancient texts. Although they can distinguish one *Raga* from the other and can sing them accurately, yet the musicians find it difficult to explain the shades scientifically. When questioned further, the Carnatic musician would say that the particular notes, normal and modified ones that occur in the *Ragas*, and the order in which they are arranged, go to make the different *Ragas*. But he knows that this is not a sufficiently satisfactory explanation. The Hindusthani musician may go a little further and say that the notes, their order of arrangement, along with the *Vadi-Samvadi* scheme (Sonant-Subsonant), and occurrence of characteristic musical phrases, distinguish the one *Raga* from the other. He, too,

cannot explain the *Vadi-Samvadi* idea clearly though he knows them well and executes them skilfully. This is due to the absence of knowledge of the musical theories formulated before A.D. 1300. Although the practice of music has continued on a scientific and grammatical basis, the history of the theory of music has somehow lost its continuity between A.D. 1200 and 1400. How did this come about? It seems that the invaders from Ghazni and elsewhere not only looted our material wealth but also set fire to our huge libraries. They also seized many books on the arts and sciences and carried them away to their capitals. Even in later days, when the invaders settled down in India, the scholars and the artists did not always have an easy time and were often subjected to religious persecution or conversion. This led to many works of art being destroyed or their study neglected. When political and social conditions settled somewhat in the 15th century, the scholars of the period found many traditions and concepts incomprehensible, because of the lack of books written in A.D. 1200-1400, and some of them had, therefore, to invent new theories or give new meanings to the old concepts.

Let us go back to our discussion of *Jati*. From Matanga's explanation of the *Jati* it seems that it was the Mode type. He states that 'the Mode type (*Jati*) results from the intervals, the initial (*Graha*) and other notes brought together'. We can rely on Matanga because it was he who undertook the task of summing up the musical knowledge that had grown up between Bharata's and his own time.

*Jatis* were of four kinds, viz., *Shuddha Svaras*, *Svara Sadharana*, *Kakali Nishada*, and *Antara Gandharas*. Kallinatha explains *Svara Sadharana* (inter-calary) by taking an analogy from the seasons. 'It is chilly in the shade', he says, 'but in the sun one perspires; the spring is come but the winter has not yet departed. This is the *Sadharana* or natural characteristic of a transition from one season to another'. In music too there are similarly two *Sadharanas*, the *Svara Sadharana* and the *Jati Sadharana*. When *Ni* is raised by two *Shrutis* it is called *Kakali*, not *Shadaja*. The word *Sadharana* is appropriate as it stands

between *Ni* and *Sa*. *Gandhara* also becomes *Sadharana* and is called *Antara Ga*, not *Ma* when it stands midway between *Ga* and *Ma*.

'When two *Shrutis* from *Sa* pass into *Ni* we have *Kakali* (*Nishadha*). When the same is done from *Ma* to *Ga* it is *Antara* (*Ga Shuddha*).' 'The note called *Kakali* is obtained by raising *Ni* (modern *Ni Komal*) by two *Shrutis*. *Antara* is obtained from *Ga* (modern *Ga Komal*) in the same manner. They are not properly considered as notes because they can never be taken as tonic.'

Kallinatha then proceeds to explain the respective uses of these notes. He says: '*Svara Sadharana* is assigned to two *Gramas*. There is *Shadaja Sadharana* or *Kakali Ni* in the *Shadaja Grama* and *Madhyama Sadharana*, i.e., *Antara Ga* in the *Madhyama Grama*.' With the introduction of these two additional notes of the fourth type, the scale became a ten-note one. Thus in Bharata's time we find all the unmodified notes of our times in use and, over and above those, the notes *Sa* and *Pa* were also allowed modification.

Seven other *Murchanas* could easily be found by a mixture of the *Murchanas* of these two *Gramas*, thus making their number twenty-one in all. Each of the twenty-one *Murchanas* had its own name. Some of them bore Vedic names, viz., *Agnistamik*, *Vajpeyik* etc., which leads one to believe that these *Murchanas* served some purpose in Vedic rites, and were harbingers of many worldly benefits. There were other *Murchanas*, viz., *Yakshika*, *Ahi* etc., which served different magical purposes. But later these names gave place to new ones such as *Harinashya*, *Souviri*, *Shuddha Madhyama*, possibly from the places of their origin—like *Harina*, *Souviri* etc.

Bharata classified the *Svaras* in a *Jati* into the following four groups according to their respective *Shruti* positions in the musical scale:

- (1) *Vadi* is the note which occurs frequently in a song.
- (2) *Samavadi* is that which is either eight or twelve *Shrutis* away from the *Vadi*.
- (3) The *Svara* which is discordant with the tonic, *Vadi*

or *Samavadi*, is called *Vivadi*.

(4) Notes other than these are called *Anuvadis*.

Later Bharata endows the following attributes to his *Jatis*. They are *Graha*, *Vadi*, *Nyasa*, *Apanyasa*, *Sanyasa*, *Vinyasa*, *Tar*, *Mandra*, *Alpatva*, *Bahulatva*, *Shadavatva*, *Odavatva* and *Antarmarga* of *Murchanas*.

*Graha* is the commencing note of the *Jatis*, or the note with which a musical piece starts, and has the same importance as *Vadi*.

A *Vadi*, otherwise known as *Amsasvara*, according to Bharata, is the fountainhead of the sentiment expressed by a *Jati*, which determines the notes of upper and lower limits of the tetrachord, and is distinct by itself among the other notes and determines *Samavadi* and *Anuvadis*. It was later known as *Jiva Svara* or 'life note' of a melody. The musician, in the course of his singing, found that this note helped him to express an emotion better, so he stayed on at it a little longer than at the others as it heightened the musical effect.

In the music of any standard melody, the note that is virtually its keynote has been called *Vadi*, while the note which is made to appear the brightest and which becomes the *de facto* dominant in the interpretation is known as *Amsasvara*. The use of such a note actually connotes the living dynamism of the *Raga* while being sung and is thus the dominant note.

*Nyasa* is the note which closes a musical piece and is most important as it determines the melody. Its name is derived from the word *Ni*, meaning *Nitaram* ('always'), to which has been added the suffix *ans* meaning 'sitting'. So it is a note on which the melody 'sat well' and served as its basis.

Gradually, when the drone became the point of start and return of all musical pieces, the old convention of beginning and ending music with specific notes came to an end. The drone superseded it.

*Apanyasa* is the note used as staying note which helps to determine the emotion in the middle of a musical piece and its use is similar to that of the comma in a sentence.

*Sanyasa* and *Vinyasa* are two varieties of mediants, the former occurring at the end of the first division of the song and the latter occurring at the end of the first tune.

*Tar* is the use of top notes or higher octave notes.

*Mandra* is the lowest note, the one which gives its name to the *Murchana* or *Jati*.

*Alpatva* is the paucity of the use of a certain note which helps to particularise one *Jati* from another. This is achieved either by *Langhanam*, or leaping over the note, or by *Anabhyasa*, i.e., not uttering it at all.

*Odavatva* and *Shadvatva* specify the number of notes to be used in the *Jati*. The former consists of five and the latter of six notes.

*Bahulatva* is just the reverse of *Alpatva* and is achieved by repeating the note frequently. It means 'multiplicity'.

*Antarmarga* is the relation of the *Vadi* with other notes which establishes the individuality of the *Jati*. *Jati* took 5, 6, and 7 notes and was known as *Odava*, *Shadava* and *Sampurna* respectively.

Thus the *Jati* of Bharata, which is the bedrock of his melody, corresponds to the Greek tropoi or modes. Each parent scale was susceptible to as many modal variations as the number of notes it contained. In the beginning they were of two kinds, *Shuddha* and *Vikrita*. *Shuddha Jatis* used all the seven notes of the gamut. According to Bharata the note from which the *Jati* took its name should be also its *Graha*, *Amsa*, *Nyasa* and *Apanyasa*. When they differed the *Jatis* were *Vikrita*. Also when a *Jati* took any note, other than the one from which it derived its name, as its mediant, initial or *Amsa* note it was called *Vikrita Jati*. They could also be composed by using five or six notes instead of seven except in *Shadaji Jati* in which it was not however possible to improvise (*Sanchara*) with five notes. Gradually, the number of *Jati* varieties increased as they went on making use of one or both the inter-calary notes: *Kakali Ni* and *Antara Ga*. They were named *Nishadi*, *Shadaji*, *Arshavi*, *Gandhari*, *Madhyami*, *Panchami*, corresponding to the Greek Lydian, Phrygian, Dorian, Hypolydian, Hypophrygian, Hypodorian and

Myxolydian scales respectively. *Jatis* were derivatives from *Grama Ragas* and were derived by choosing notes for the various functions upon which melody depended compared to the essential property of the *Gramas*—the order of intervals.

The final note in a *Jati* never ended in the *Tar* (upper octave).

'The technique of singing the melody as embodied in a *Jati* was thus very advanced. The *Jatis* were sung according to *Chitra*, *Vartika*, and *Dakshina Margas* employing *Magadhi*, *Ardhamagadhi*, *Sambhavita* and *Prithula Gitis* or compositions. The three octaves were employed. The four *Varnas* and an elaborate system of graces added variety to the *Gitis*. *Tanas* of different kinds were also known.'

Bharata's *Natya Shastra* is thus the first book on Indian music which recorded all the developments that had taken place between the time of *Marga* music and his own time. It also indicated, for the first time, the sentiment (*Bhava*) and flavour (*Rasa*) associated with music. Moreover, at the time of the *Natya Shastra*, though the word *Raga* had not become current, for all practical purposes the *Jatis* provided the genus of *Raga* which, just after Bharata, made its appearance and became the cornerstone of the subsequent music of the country.

The next phase of development in Indian music is found in the *Brihaddeshi* of Matanga. As the name implies, the book was on *Deshi* or indigenous music. Here, for the first time, we come across the word *Raga* which Matanga defines as 'a combination of attractive notes which, with beautiful illuminating graces, pleases the people in general'. Though he adopts all the ten attributes of Bharata's *Jatis* with their definitions and applies them to his *Raga* 'idea', he claims that 'the word had not been used by any of my predecessors', including Bharata himself. The word *Raga* is derived from the root word *Ranja* (to please), to colour, to which the suffix *Ghan* denoting 'doing', had been added.

A *Jati* was, after all, not a melody in the Western sense 'but a bare scaffolding. But when it came to be sung it was subjected to much variation and ornamentation. The nature

of transformation was affected purely by the mood of the moment' which gave it a special character. This came to be called *Raga*.

Matanga differentiates between *Raga* and *Geeti*. 'Music which uses attractive note-compositions with beautiful and illuminating graces constitutes *Geetis*, and music in which the four *Varnas*, i.e., the values of duration, ascent, descent and movements, are gracefully combined to form a pattern should be known as *Raga*.'

For the first time Matanga defines the role of folk music (*Deshi*). Till then it was not even referred to though they were 'the first essays made by man in distributing his notes to express his feelings in terms of design. . . . Folk music supplies an epitome of the principle upon which the musical part is founded.'

He was the first person to tap the sources of earlier music and he has given us a list of *Ragas* contributed by the non-Aryan tribes to Aryan music and has proved beyond doubt how the latter classical music owes its debt to them.

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## 6. Raga—The Charmer

WE HAVE seen how music gradually acquired note after note ending in the completion of the scale and from which were later born the *Jatis*. From the *Jatis* to *Ragas* was just one more step forward as in the course of development the different arrangements of the tetrachords came to be associated with different groups of notes which were given varying prominence and significance in the scale.

These groups of notes became the nuclei for different *Ragas*. Later, each individual nucleus was chosen in such a manner as not to disturb the symmetry of the two tetrachords. As the *Raga* had been an ever-growing idea, it was soon found that the adoption of this process only led to the formulation of a very limited number of *Ragas* with perfectly similar tetrachords. So the use of dissimilar tetrachords was introduced to enable the composers to create other new *Ragas*.

Thus the *Ragas* were the outcome of the efforts of the artistes 'to reduce to law and order the tunes that come and go on the lips of the people'.

To the Westerners, accustomed to listening to the music based on harmony, the understanding and appreciation of Indian music does not come easily. To most of them it is incomprehensible as, unlike theirs, it does not 'constantly change or contrast its mood. It, on the contrary, always centres on one particular emotion which it tries to develop, explain, cultivate, and insists on exalting until it has created in the minds of the listeners an acute suggestion which it is impossible to resist.'<sup>1</sup> The main characteristic of a *Raga* is its power



to evoke this emotion. The mode must 'seize the listener's mind and hold it enchanted. . . .'<sup>2</sup>

Every Indian song or piece of music is said to be in a particular *Raga*. The *Raga*, like the old Greek or ecclesiastical mode, is the selection of five, six or seven notes distributed along the scale; but it is more particularised than a mode in which are important not only the notes used in the octave but also the sequence in which they are used, 'for it has a certain characteristic progression',<sup>3</sup> with some other special features.

*Raga* has been defined by Matanga as a 'combination of notes, illustrated by melodic movements (*Varna*), which is capable of producing pleasant sensations'. The depth, height or compass of a *Raga* thus depends upon the discernment and depth of feeling of the artiste and his capacity to select and arrange the notes in a mode that can evoke and hold a mood at its highest pitch. Since the introduction of the term *Raga* with this meaning, the underlying idea of the *Raga* has broadened till it has come to denote *Murchana* idealised. All post-Matanga writers on music have taken their cue from him and have defined it as a 'particular arrangement of sounds in which the notes and melodic movements (*Varnas*) appear like ornaments and enchant the mind.'

*Varnas* have been explained as audible patterns and designs capable of being formed by different arrangements of notes. 'The action of singing is called *Varna*.' It is of four kinds: *Sthayi* (level), *Arohana* (ascent), *Avarohana* (descent) and *Sanchari* (wandering). *Sthayi* has been defined as the holding of the same note continuously. 'The singing of a verse on one note only is called *Sthayivarna*.' And when a motive begins and ends on the same note, 'this one note came to mean a fixed arrangement of notes'. *Arohi* and *Avarohi* thus mean an ascent and descent in the scale, indicating the *Raga* in its bare outline. '*Sanchari* is a melodic movement combining both the features.'

To this central idea of the *Raga* Matanga added the ten main features or attributes with which Bharata adorned his *Jati*, besides a few other elements to complete the concept

of the *Raga*. The old *Vadi* was retained and its meaning came to be amplified as it was found that it occupied a very important place in the *Raga* scheme. Moreover it was felt that 'the *Vadi* helps by providing a point of reference to maintain the accuracy of the intervals between the notes of its own tetrachords'. It came to be defined as the prince among the notes in a *Raga* as 'it has the power to bring out a particular mood inherent in the *Raga*'.

The dominant can acquire its characteristics of shine and beauty, first, by the relationships such as *Vaditva* (sonancy) and *Samvaditva* (consonancy) existing between itself and other notes in the *Raga* design; secondly, by the functional aspect such as *Amsa*, *Graha*, *Nyasa* and other stipulated relationships which appear during the actual process of singing; thirdly, by the decorative techniques which heighten the charm not only of the dominant note but that of the whole *Raga*, even as a nicely fitting ring beautifies not only the particular finger but the entire hand.

'The dominant, or *Amsa*, has to be demonstrated in all its glory and splendour so that the full beauty of the *Raga* may be revealed. It has to be shown over the three octaves if possible.

'The *Vadi*, being constantly heard, dominates the melody. Because it explains and heralds the mode it is called *Vadi*.' Consequently it came to be called *Jivasvara*, or the life-note.

*Samvadi*, meaning 'speaking alike', is the acoustically co-related note of the Sonant. The function of this note is the same as the *Vadi* in the other tetrachords. It has been defined as 'that which sustains the impression created by *Vadi*'. They are complementary notes. The distance between them in the ascent has been fixed at twelve *Shrutis* and in the descent at eight. And these intervals can be no other than the fifth and its complement fourth.

The ancient writers have left exhaustive directions as regards the *Vadis* and *Samvadis* in the different *Ragas*:

- (1) All those *Ragas* which have unmodified notes or the *Ragas* which have all other notes flat except *E*

generally have *E* or *G* as *Vadi*.

- (2) In the case of all *Ragas* which have all notes modified except *E* and *F*, and omit the '*G*' note, *E* or *F* usually becomes *Vadi*.
- (3) *Ragas* which omit either *D* or *F* or *A* or *B*, take *E* or *G* as their *Vadi*.
- (4) *Ragas* which have *F* or *G* as *Vadi* usually take *D* or *A* as *Samvadi*.
- (5) *Ragas* which have flat *E* as the *Vadi* take *F* or *G* as *Samvadi*; if either *F* or *G* is *Vadi* then naturally *A* or *D* becomes *Samvadi*; but if these *Ragas* have flat *D* as substantive then *D* cannot be *Samvadi*.
- (6) *Ragas* which use *C* as *Vadi* never omit *G* but use it as *Samvadi*.

Though modified notes are not preferred either as *Vadi* or *Samvadi* their uses as such are not prohibited. On the contrary, we find in some texts modified notes being referred to as *Vadi-Samvadis*. The *Vadi-Samvadis* are counterparts of the sonant and consonant in Western music.

The *Vadi-Samvadi* plan makes it clear that in the earlier phase of its development Indian music, as a rule, used the octave consisting of two similar tetrachords. But with the coming into use of dissimilar tetrachords this parallelism of *Vadi-Samvadi* notes in two different tetrachords become a little complicated and *Samvadi* came to be somewhat neglected. Consequently the whole *Raga* came to be centred on the *Vadi* alone which was 'aided by the association of certain other notes known as *Sangatis*'—a process almost similar to the progression of Western music by chords.

Gradually the idea of evolving new *Ragas* by omitting either one or two notes in the ascent or in the descent or in the both or one in the ascent and two in the descent or vice versa, dawned on the Indian mind. These notes came to be known as *Varja* (omitted ones). Subsequently the omitted note or notes came to be used obliquely as substantive note or notes which added colour to the *Raga*. Probably the origin of the oblique use of a note or notes 'lies in the tendency to choose

between two consonant notes, the note of passage being next to that note which is being omitted. This creating of gaps in the ascent, to be filled up in the descent or vice versa, not only avoids anti-climax or tautology as in Western music but induces a climax. To pass over a note immediately creates a desire for it and then it becomes unfit to bear the climax.<sup>14</sup>

A note is sometimes omitted because its use is somewhat disagreeable to the melody proper and is termed *Vivadi*, or inimical. Though inimical, its use has not been completely avoided. On the contrary, some ancient texts advise its use as it helps to individualise the *Raga*, and lends charm and colour to the melody. Its use is very similar to the dissonance in the Western music, about which an authority says:

‘Strictly speaking, much greater satisfaction is felt when a dissonant note is received into a consonant note than when nothing but a consonant note has been heard. It is the force of contrast which produces these sensations in us, just as we undoubtedly appreciate a calm after the storm. This is exactly the idea which has unconsciously guided the music of our time. Its strength lies in dissonances—if they do not last long they will be at least resolved into consonant notes.’<sup>15</sup>

Authors of ancient Indian musical texts were quite familiar with this idea. They, too, have said ‘that the use of the inimical note in the descent does not impair the *Raga* but, on the contrary, enhances its pleasing character.’ But they have restricted its use only to a mere touch here and there in the descent alone.

Why did the Indian authorities suggest its use in the descent alone? It is because the dissonant note in the ascent is usually nearer to the sonant and the nearer it is, the lesser the contrast. But in the descent, the dissonant, it was found from experience, being at a greater distance from the sonant, is capable of revealing the contrast more precisely and clearly.

It was left to Matanga to state clearly that no *Raga* can be formed by less than five notes. He stated that ‘the tribal people generally sing *Ragas* with less than five notes’. And by imposing this new rule he superimposed an Aryan ideal and standard on the music of India as many non-Aryan tribal

and regional tunes were being assimilated and passed into the Aryan fold.

Besides the above, certain other rules were drawn up for the regulation of the *Ragas*. The *Ragas* were never to omit *C*, and *F* and *G* were never to be dropped simultaneously from one and the same *Raga*. The reason for this is that with Indian music not being based on harmony the use of a chromatic scale suits it quite well. But the use of this scale requires the major fifth or a major fourth relationship between the corresponding tetrachords which, being the very basis of the Indian scale, had to be preserved intact. The maintenance of this relationship requires every scale to include in addition to the fundamental, either its major fourth or major fifth to function as the consonant to be used as a point of reference in the second tetrachord. This inclusion of either the major fourth or major fifth in addition to the fundamental note makes it clear that music in India starts with and necessarily returns to the prime notes of the drone. This helps a singer, first, to maintain his tonality correctly by referring to the consonances generated by the harmony of the drone and, secondly, to fix the necessary intermediate notes correctly. These two things together thus go a long way to provide the singer with a plan for contrasts and comparisons of the different notes constituting the *Raga*.

Another peculiarity of *Ragas* is that they never use the modified note along with the substantive ones successively. The reason for not using the substantive notes side by side with the modified one seems to be that while ascending the scale a note becomes the perfect consonance with another note. In the *Shuddha* scale, the degrees are so arranged that they represent the consonances indicating three pitches. So between the two consecutive pitches or notes of the *Shuddha* scale there can be no other pitch as consonant. Any intermediate note, if chosen, is sure to be either flatter or sharper. Being a consonance the unmodified note compares well with the drone and also with the other modified notes. From this it can easily be realised that the *Shuddha* note is related either to the drone or to the other *Shuddha* notes as consonances

and the sharp flats, being more or less dissonances, do not compare favourably. So the use of the unmodified notes successively with the modified ones generates two conflicting aesthetic appeals which defeat the main purpose of a *Raga*, viz., the unity of sentiment or feeling.

The notes which are not sonants, consonants or dissonants are assonants and are known in India as *Anuvadis*.

Apart from the above important notes, another note occupies a conspicuous place in the *Raga* scheme. In the modern vocabulary it is called *Mukam*, or the resting place of the *Raga*. Like *Vadi*, this note is also lengthened for a considerable time with a three-fold object: first, to serve as an auxiliary to the fundamental thus lending additional charm; secondly, to enable the artist to rest here and find the time to think about his next move; and, thirdly, to help him compare his voice to the drone.

'None of the *Ragas* take more than seven substantive notes, and there is no modulation: the strange tonality of Indian music is due to the use of many successive notes with small divisions.

'Thus the *Raga* may be best defined as a melody mould or the ground plan of a song. Singers or players are to improvise upon the theme thus defined.'

According to *Brihaddeshi*, the tunes known by the generic name of *Geetis*, folk-songs or airs, were of seven varieties. One of them, labelled the *Ragagiti*, was melody proper. The melody had its derivative known as *Bhasa* which later came to be subdivided into *Bhasa* and *Vibhasa*. Both together correspond to *Ragas* and *Raginis* of later times.

Other types of melody usually sung in India are known as *Dhuns* or *Jillas*. The *Dhun* is not only free from all restrictions of fixed number of notes, regulated arrangement of traversing of the notes upward and downward and the use of *Murchanas*—compared to the *Raga*, which is a complete melodic structure having a depth—but is a mixture of various bits of tunes. Though it lacks the inherent expansiveness of the *Raga*, at first hearing it possesses a semblance of the *Raga*.

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 Ahobala: *Sangeet Parijata*

## 7. The Classification of Ragas

IN THE time of *Jatis* and during the early days of the evolution of the *Ragas*, classification was based on the number of notes comprising them. But with the multiplicity of *Ragas* they came to be classified on the basis of their similarities and dissimilarities. Later they were classified into *Grama Bhasa*, *Antarabhasa* and *Vibhasa Ragas*. The *Grama Ragas* were those which took all the notes of the parent scale.

The next classification that came into vogue divided them into *Raganga*, *Bhasanga*, *Kriyanga* and *Upanga Ragas*. '*Ragangas* are so called by the learned as they imitate the appearance (shadows of the *Ragas*). Similarly the *Bhasangas* imitated the visages (shadows of the *Bhasas*). The *Upangas* were so called by the learned by reason of imitating the visages or *Angas* or special characteristics.' 'And *Kriyangas* have been so named because they imitated action (*Kriya*). i.e. the style of renderings.'

In course of time, as the melodies became more elaborate and complex, they came to be classified as *Shuddha* (pure), *Sankirna* (mixed) and *Chayalaga* (shadow-form). *Ragas* were termed *Chayalaga* when they used a few notes from another *Raga* provided this did not alter its mood or sentiment but on the contrary added to its subtleties. Mixtures of several *Ragas* came to be known as *Sankirnas*.

'A pure *Raga* charms unaided, a shadowed *Raga* with the help of another *Raga* and a mixed *Raga* with the help of two *Ragas*,' says an old text.

In course of time, all these systems were dropped one after



another and new ways of classification were invented. 'Starting from very simple principles, the system of classification developed into a highly complicated one. Classification is the soul of the *Raga* system. It does the duty of opus. Instead of naming each particular piece, Indian music goes by genus and species.'

Soon the melodies came to be divided into *Melas*, a new name for the ancient *Murchanas*, and a new classification in the names and styles of *Janaka* (parent) and *Janya* (generic) *Ragas* or the derivative *Ragas* was introduced by Venkata-mukhi. We know that the sequence of seven notes in ascent and descent was known as a *Murchana*. Even 'twelve-note scales from which were built up the mode types' went by the name of *Murchana*.

'Thus, eighty-four modes or manners might be formed by giving the lead to each of the twelve notes, and by varying in seven different ways the positions of the semi-tones. But since many of these would be insufferable in practice and some would have no character sufficiently marked, we have retained with predilection the number indicated by nature, and have enforced our system by two powerful aids: the association of ideas and the mutilation of the regular scales.' But this classification, too, became obsolete due to the many changes in the Northern musical system innovated by the early Muslims.

It was left to Mohammad Reza, a wealthy citizen of Patna and an eminent connoisseur of music, to offer in his book *Nagmat-e-Asfi* (A.D. 1813) a new system of classification based on the structural similarities of *Ragas*. He discarded the then prevalent old scale and accepted *Bilawal* as his basic scale.

This method was given a new lease of life by Pt. Bhatkhande who, in his treatise *Sri-mal-Laksha-Sangitam* (1921), adopted the system of unifiers (*Melakas* or *Thatas*) and derivatives (*Janya*), accepting *Bilawal* as the fundamental scale—which continues to be so even today. This scale is similar to the major scale of C of the West with very little difference. It is known as the *Shuddha* scale of the North. In medieval

times it was known as *Shankarabharna*, a name still retained in the South for the same scale.

The second scale is known as *Kalyan*, which uses all the notes of *Bilawal* with the fourth accentuated. It is similar to the *Shantakalyani* of the South.

The third parent scale of the North is *Khambaj* in which all the notes of the second scale are retained with the seventh flattened. Its ancient name is *Harikambhoji* and its Southern counterpart is *Kambhoji*.

The fourth scale is *Bhairon*. Here all the notes of the first scale are used with the second and the sixth flattened. The South calls it *Mayamalava-Gouda*.

The fifth scale is *Poorvi*, in which all the notes of the fourth scale are retained intact with the fourth, which finds itself sharpened. Its medieval name is *Ramakriya* and the same name is retained in the South even to this day.

The sixth scale of North India is *Marva*. In this all the notes of the fifth scale are retained excepting the flat sixth which is replaced by an unmodified one. South India knows this as *Gamanakriya*.

The seventh scale is *Bhairavi*. In this, all the notes except *Sa* (C) and *Pa* (G) are flattened. In medieval times, it was known as *Todi*—a name still retained in the South.

The eighth scale in the North is evolved by substituting the flat second of the fourth scale by an unmodified fourth. The scale is known as *Asavari* which in medieval texts is known as *Bhairavi* and often as *Natabhairavi*. The first *Raga* of this scale called by the name of its parent scale is known in the South as *Riti-Goud*.

The ninth scale of the North is found by replacing the flat sixth of the eighth scale by an unmodified sixth and it is called *Kafi*. Its medieval name was *Karaharapriya*, which the South retains even now. In ancient times it was known as *Sri Raga* and formed the *Shuddha* scale.

The tenth scale of the North can be found by retaining all the notes of the seventh scale excepting its accentuated fourth which is replaced by the unmodified one. It is called *Todi*. Its Southern contemporary is *Saiva-Pantuvavudi*.

These are the ten main scales of the North from which innumerable *Ragas* can be generated by the application of the laws of *Raga*-construction. All the scales have been named after their first *Ragas*.

But even this elaborate classification, though it serves our purpose, is far from perfect, as has been admitted by its author, Pt. Bhatkhande. The problem still remains how to classify a *Raga* if it contains more than seven notes—all the above modes classify the *Ragas* of the seven notes only. This can only be solved either by placing the *Raga* under some mixed mode or by increasing the number of modes. We know that the *Ragas* in Indian music have been created not by a re-arrangement of the notes of their parent scale but by arranging them under different systems according to the notes they emphasise.

For the present classification of the *Ragas* it is only necessary to know the notes that constitute them, but for classifying them according to their constructional affinities it is imperative to know not only the notes used but also how they are used and then find out *Ragas* of a similar nature to group them together. For instance, the notes that constitute *Kafi Raga* also produce the *Malhar* and *Kanada* group of melodies. There are many varieties of *Malhar* and *Kanada*. Some of them are now found under the *Kafi* mode and some under the *Asavari* mode. There are striking similarities and affinities between the *Kanadas* and the *Malhars* of these two groups and for the structural and tonal affinities they have all been called *Malhars* or *Kanadas*. Similarly there are innumerable melodies with affinities of construction and sentiments but placed under different modes.

If we analyse the existing modes of North Indian music we can classify them under two main groups:

1. Modes using *Shuddha Ri*, i.e. unmodified *D*.
2. Modes using *Komal Ri*, i.e. flat *D*.

Under the first group fall *Bilawal*, *Kalyan*, *Khambaj*, *Kafi* and *Asavari* and under the second group, *Bhairavi*, *Todi*,

*Poorvi*, *Bhairon* and *Marwa*. There are some melodies, viz., *Kedar*, *Kamod*, *Chayanat*, *Hamir*, *Shyam*, *Goud-Sarang*, and *Emani Bilawal*, which possess the features of both the *Kalyan* and *Bilawal* modes and as such they can be placed under any of the above two modes. So these *Ragas* may be called the connecting links between the two modes. The two modes differ only in their use of the fourth.

The *Bilawal* and *Khambaj Ragas* differ only in their use of the note *Ni (B)*—the former using the unmodified and the latter the flattened one. All the melodies taking both the *Nishadas (B)* come in between these two modes. *Kham-baja Raga* itself uses both the unmodified and flattened *B* and so do the melodies *Alhaiya*, *Bihagra*, *Tilak Kamode*, *Nata-Malhar*, *Goud Malhar*. Though all the *Ragas* except *Alhaiya* are now deemed to belong to the mode *Khambaj*, yet the influence of *Bilawal* in one form or other is perceptible to some extent in all of them.

The *Khambaj* and *Kafi* modes differ only in their use of *Ga (E)*. The former takes the unmodified *E*, whereas the *Kafi* mode uses the flattened *E*. Naturally, all the *Ragas*, taking both types of *Ga (E)* fall in between these two modes. *Jaijayanti*, *Desh* and some types of *Malhar* take the unmodified *E* and so the influence of either or both of *Khambaj* and *Kafi* melodies is very often perceived in them.

The modes of *Kafi* and *Asavari* differ only in the use of the note *Dha (A)*, the former using the unmodified note while the latter uses the flattened one. Though very few *Ragas* use modified *Dha*, there is a good deal of similarity between many of the *Ragas* of these groups. Both *Kafi* and *Asavari* have *Malhar*, *Kanada* and *Sarang* types of melodies in them. Though both these groups use *Komal Ga (Flat E)* yet their affinity is not so much tonal as structural, since most of the *Ragas* of these groups use common phrases like *NP(BG)*, *MRP(FEG)* and *GMRS(EFDC)* respectively.

The modes *Asavari* and *Bhairavi* are distinguished by their use of the note *Ri(D)*, the former taking the unmodified form and the latter a flattened form; and so the *Ragas* having both kinds of *Ri* stand between these two groups. *Raga*

*Malkous*, for instance, though classified under *Bhairavi*, can also be placed under *Asavari* as it uses the unmodified *D*.

The *Bhairavi* and *Todi* differ only in their use of the notes *Ma(F)* and *Ni(B)*. They have a natural affinity between them; for instance, the *Raga Bilaskhani Todi* takes the notes of *Bhairavi* but is sung in the characteristic style of *Todi*, though it is classified under *Bhairavi*.

The modes *Todi* and *Poorvi* are differentiated by the use of the note *Ga(E)*, the former taking the flat and the latter the unmodified one. The *Raga Vasant* can be placed under any of these two modes, though it is classed under *Poorvi*.

The modes *Poorvi* and *Bhairavi* differ only in the use of *Ma(F)*, the former having the sharper one and the latter the unmodified one. But many melodies now placed under the *Poorvi* mode take unmodified *Ma* and there are some which take both the unmodified and flat *Ga*, e.g. *Paraj*, *Pancham*, *Lalit*, *Vasant* and *Gouri*. They possess both tonal and structural affinities with many of the melodies of the *Marva* and *Bhairav* groups.

The modes *Bhairav* and *Marva* differ only in their use of the note *Dha(A)*, the former taking the flat and the latter the unmodified one. This difference of *Dha* leaves a strong impression on the mind. But the *Marva* and *Kalyan* groups have some melodies which have structural affinities between them; thus *Poorva Kalyan* of the former group and *Hindol* of the latter group resemble each other in several features of their structure.

From a study of the structural analysis of the prevalent modes it becomes clear that the use of either the two *Ris(D)* or the two *Dhas(A)* in one and the same *Raga* would be insufferable in practice and unaesthetic in treatment when compared to the *Ragas* taking the two *Gas (E)* and *Nis (B)*. That is why the *Ragas* of the former class are very few.

Another point worth noting is that the *Ragas* can be placed under two different classes because sometimes they take *Shrutis* which are between the same notes of the two different *Ragas*; *Dha* of *Deshi* is between the note *Dha* of *Asavari* and the *Dha* of *Kafi*; so is *Dha* of *Poorvi* which stands in between

the *Dha* of *Poorvi* and the *Dha* of *Dhanashri*; *Dha* of *Lalit* is between the *Dha* of *Poorvi* and the *Dha* of *Marva*.

Pt. Bhatkhande has classified the aforementioned as the *Paramela Pravesak Ragas*. But as the modes prevalent are not sung successively, this new classification has no meaning. *Ragas* of the *Kalyan* class are all sung after the sunset whereas the *Ragas* of the *Bilawal* group are all timed to be sung either in the late morning or after midnight. Only some *Ragas* of the *Pooria*, *Marva*, *Khamaj*, and *Kafi* classes can be called *Paramela Pravesak* as they can be sung successively fitting the periods fixed for them. To be more precise, it can be said that after singing the *Ragas* of the *Poorvi* group one can sing the *Ragas* of the *Marva* group and after singing the *Ragas* of *Khamaj* class one can easily sing such melodies as can belong both to the *Khambaj* and the *Kafi* families. The *Ragas* which belong to the two classes are called *Paramela-Pravesak Ragas* (those entering into the other modes). These *Ragas* prove the inter-relation of the modes.

The *Ragas* can also be classified according to the similarity of their nature, i.e. expressional similarity due to the structural affinity known as *Raganga Raga* classification.

## 8. Down to the Source

**I**N THE previous chapters we have seen how *Deshi* (folk) music elbowed its way with slow but steady steps into the arena of Indian music and carved out a permanent place for itself in the hearts of the people. The history of Indian music from the earliest times to our own days has been the history of the evolution of an indigenous musical tradition and musical lore. Into its making have gone many colourful tunes and musical practices of the various peoples, both autochthonous and foreign who settled down in the country and made India their home.

Before discussing in detail the chief characteristics of the current melodies, let us have a peep into their past, see whence they came and how they entered into the musical culture and pattern of the country.

As in the case of other branches of Indian culture in music too non-Aryan threads have been interwoven with the woof of Aryan genius. This assimilation and harmonisation have taken different shapes and forms. Often the elements borrowed have been re-shaped beyond recognition to fit into the Aryan culture-pattern; to make the usurpation complete Aryan colour was given to them in such a manner as to seem original Aryan contribution.\* The history of Indian music from Aryan invasion to our days is thus the history of this assimilation, appropriation and Indianisation through the long centuries.

\* *Krivantu Vishvan Aryan.*

Probing into the origin of *Raga* names, we find that at times some region or people is spotlighted only to be allowed to relapse into obscurity again, to be heard of no more. There are some names, however, which emerge over and over like some coloured thread in a tapestry. There is a wealth of romance behind the origin and growth of the early Indian melodies.

In the earliest musical texts the *Jatis* took their names from the significant or prominent notes used in them. Thus we find *Jatis Shadaji* from *Shadaja*, *Arshavi* from *Rishabha*, *Gandhari* from *Gandhar*, *Madhyami* from *Madhyama*, *Panchami* from *Panchama*, *Dhaivati* from *Dhaivat* and *Nishadi* from *Nishada Murchanas*, in which the said notes were prominent. They were known as *Svarakhya Ragas* or melodies known by their note-names.

Many of these names are still prevalent in our current musical *Raga* practices, e.g. *Shadaji* in the form of *Bhinna-Shadaja* (i.e. *Shadaji* in *Bhinna* style, which we shall discuss later); *Gandhari* retains its old name, *Madhyami* became *Madhyamadi* in medieval times changing into *Madhamadi* in the current practice in the North and *Madhyamavati* in the South. *Panchami* survives in the present-day *Panchama Raga*, though its structures, form and note-compositions have undergone many changes at different times. Our present *Asavari Raga*, it seems, is a vulgarisation of the old *Arshavi*—the word *Ashavari* has no meaning in the Sanskrit language. The old *Nishadi* tune still survives by the name of *Nishada* in the Carnatic music.

*Vibhasa*, which once was a generic name for a class of derivative *Ragas*, now survives in our contemporary melodies as *Vibhasa Raga*.

Several tribes, both indigenous and foreign, which inhabited this country long before the Aryan invasion, as well as those which came after the Aryans also contributed their musical traditions to enable the Aryans to build up a musical heritage that goes by the name of Indian music. We all know that the Sakas, Takkas, Malavas, Abhiras, Gurjaras, Savaras, Pulindas, Bhiravas and Dravidas were well-known tribes who



were either already settled in India when the Aryans came or followed them soon after. The Sakas contributed the *Saka Raga* which once was a prominent melody with its derivatives *Saka-Tilaka* and *Saka-Misrita*—all, alas, now extinct. *Takka Raga*, one of the chief melodies mentioned in Matanga's *Brihaddeshi*, was borrowed from a foreign tribe of the same name, who came to India sometime before the Buddha and settled down here. It seems they were a very powerful tribe and had established some principalities in the Punjab and in the then N.W.F. Province. The cities of Atock (Takka) and Takkshila must have derived their names from them. They were a highly civilised people and had their own alphabet, Tankari, a variation of which is still current in some parts of the Kangra valley in the Punjab. Kashyapa, a writer earlier than Matanga, mentions *Takka Raga* characterising it as 'a favourite of the Goddess Lakshmi'. This *Raga* had other derivations, too, such as *Takka-Kaisiki* which is defunct now. The tribe could not be completely Aryanised. But at a later date the tribe became converts to Islam and settled down in Rajputana in their own small principality of Tonk (a corruption of Takka) which exists even now. The *Takka Raga* ultimately changed its name into the present *Tonk Raga*, with its derivative *Tankeshri* in Hindustani music. In the South it is, however, still in existence as *Tonk Raga*.

Students of Indian history know well that the Malavas were once a very powerful people of ancient India who fought even Alexander the Great. They have also been referred to by Patanjali as a 'war-loving tribe'. Even as we owe to them the name of a part of our country, viz. Malwa, so do we owe them the *Malava Raga* which is still current by the name of *Malvi* assimilated in our *Raga* hierarchy. *Malava-Kaisika*, now vulgarised *Malkous*, is also one of its derivatives and is very popular even today. We know that *Kaisika* was a *Jati* of Bharata's time, and the original *Malava Raga* should either have been crossed with it or re-constructed on that old base. Matanga mentions also *Malva Panchama Raga*, a synthesis of *Malava* and *Panchama*. *Malsri*, as it is called in the North—*Malavsri* in the South—is another of our present day *Ragas*; it

seems to be a derivative of *Malava-Vesarika* of Matanga's time or a later cross between *Malava* and *Sri* (vulgarized *Malasri*) or it may be a present from the tribe called *Malasar* who lived in India long, long ago.

*Abhiras* formed another tribe which has played some important part in the history of Delhi and the regions around it. The people of this tribe still exist as a sub-caste of the Hindu population in some parts of Delhi and Mathura districts. They also have left their mark in the musical heritage of the country as a whole. The melody known as *Ahiri* still points towards its original source. The *Abhiri*, which is a contribution of *Abhiras*, is still current in the North, though it is not very popular; but it is popular in the South by its old name.

Such is the case with the original of the *Saveri Raga* also. The *Savaras*, we know, are an ancient tribe who mostly lived and still live in the forests and hills of Chota Nagpur. The iconography of this *Raga* depicts it as a snake charmer, which gives us a clue to the main profession of the tribe. It is a current *Raga* and is very popular with the musicians of both the North and the South.

The present *Gujri Raga* owes its origin to the Gujjara tribe, originally white Huns, who entered India about the fifth or sixth century. They were, we are told, a very cultured people. They not only gave us this tune *Gujjari*, now corrupted into *Gujri*, but also contributed the famous Garba dance of Gujarat where they later settled and mixed with the local people. The *Pahari* and *Mand* melodies are later additions from the hill peoples of Kulu and Kangra Valley and the desert peoples of Rajputana respectively, in which regions they are still sung in all their purity.

Besides these there are other *Ragas* which owe their origin to other tribes, viz., the *Pulinda Raga*, now known as *Pulindi*, came from the Pulindas. Similarly *Andhri Raga* came from the Andhra people, originally a part of the Dravidians who later travelled to South India and established a country for themselves.

The *Dravidi Raga*, now extinct, must have come in the

same way from one of the Dravidian tribes who were the original residents of India long before the Aryans came. It is still current in Carnatic music. *Kalinga*, another of our popular minor melodies, had its origin among the Kalinga tribe who also played an important role in the history of India. Similarly *Mukhari* is another melody left to us by Mukharis of Kanauj who dominated Central India during the Gupta rule.

It is usually believed that *Bhairavi Ragini* is a derivative of *Bhairon*, one of our primary male *Ragas*. But if we study the texts carefully, we would be amazed to find that *Bhairon* is a later interpolation in the *Raga-Ragini* scheme. *Bhairavi*, a far earlier tune, seems to have been borrowed from the women-folk of the Virava tribe who were mainly snake-charmers, and is very similar to the tune played on the gourd-pipe by the snake-charmer of North India even today. When the Shaiva cult became very popular and prominent the *Vairavi Ragini* was installed as a consort of the *Bhairon Raga* created to be sung during the worship of Shiva (Bhairav).

*Lati*, another later *Raganga Raga*, came from the Lata tribe then inhabiting India. Kambhojas were also a tribe of the Punjab who got assimilated in the Aryan stock and contributed the *Kambhoji* melody which is still prevalent and has become popular in the form of *Khambaj*. The surname *Kambhoja* is still retained by some people of the Punjab. So is *Khokar Raga* which seems to have come from the Khokar tribe living in the Punjab.

Marva must have come from the Marvas, meaning the desert-settlers. *Kuranji*, a Carnatic *Raga*, must have similarly come from the people living on hills, as *Kuranja* means 'of the hills'.

According to Matanga 'no melody can be constructed with four notes or less; tunes with notes less than five are used by tribes such as Savaras, Pulindas, Kambhojas, Vangas, Kiratas, Valhikas, Andhras and other forest people'. So it is quite clear that the Aryans borrowed the tunes from these tribes and, adding a note or two here and there in such a way as

not to disturb the original tune, usurped them. This process of assimilation becomes easy to understand when we study the scale-structure of the two types, classical and folk music. We find that folk type is generally based on a simple rational scale, but the advanced type of the folk music suddenly takes a semi-classical appearance when accompanied by drone and executed with simple tonal flourishes and embellishments here and there—leading us to the very door through which the classical type emerges.

Certain regions, towns and villages also have contributed to embroider the fabric of Indian music. Thus we find that the *Bangala*, a melody referred to by Matanga, is derived from the region of Bengal, or an Austro-Negroid tribe of the same name. So was the *Sindhu* contributed by the Sindhu Desa, the modern Sind. *Sorath*, a vulgarisation of Saurastri, is a gift of Saurashtra. *Varati*, now corrupted as *Varari*, came from that part of the country known as Virat Desa, the modern Berar. All these *Ragas* are still current though their shapes and structures have undergone considerable changes. Yet they remind us of their ancient places of origin. These *Ragas* were known in ancient times as *Desakhya Ragas*, meaning 'named after the regions'.

Several other *Ragas* were contributed by other culture tracts. But a good many of them could not survive the onslaught of changed tastes of the later times and fell into disuse. *Bhotta Raga*, which seems to have been originally appropriated from the people of Bhotta Desa (Bhutan of our times), is no longer current. But *Gaudi* which is still prevalent came from Gauda Desa, a part of Bengal as it was known then. So also *Purvi*, another of our current *Ragas*, is the shortened form of *Purvika Raga* and it must have been assimilated from the eastern regions of the country as *Purvika* means 'from eastern provinces'. *Kukuva*, another surviving melody, must have come into the fold of *Raga* from the town of Kukuva which was, at the time of the Guptas, a great centre of culture in the neighbourhood of Muzzafarpur in modern Bihar. The *Simhala* and *Saurasena Ragas* point to their derivations from the countries of the same names.

Similarly *Tilang* is a corruption of *Trilinga*, the country surrounded by three Lingas (Phallus)—one of which is in Daksharan in the district of Godavari, known as Bhimeswar Linga, the second on the Sri Shaila of modern Kurnool, known as Mallikarjun Linga, and the third in Kalahasti in the district of Chittoor, known as Isvara Linga. This region came to be known as Telanga and its people as Telegus.

*Kambavati*, which is a very popular melody of our times, must have had its origin in the city of Cambay, the Hindu name for which, according to Col. Todd, was Kambhavati (City of Pillars). This city was also spoken of by Marco Polo, the great Venetian adventurer. It was a fine maritime city in the time of Ibn Batuta (14th century). For the first time we learn about this *Raga* in Lochana's *Rag Tarangini* (14th century).

*Kalyana Raga* must have originated in the city of Kalyani, where the western Chalukya dynasty ruled. Someswara, the son of Vikramaditya who was a ruler of this region, was an authority on the art of music and *Kalyana Raga* may have been composed during his reign.

Some of the ancient divisions of the *Ragas* known as *Kriyanga Ragas*, though corrupted beyond recognition, retain in their altered forms traces of their ancient names. Thus *Gunakriya* of old becomes *Gunakiri* in the medieval times, vulgarised later as *Gunakali*. Such is also the origin of *Ramakali*, another of our prevalent *Ragas*, which was the *Ramakriya* of ancient times. In the South many other *Kriyanga Ragas* still survive, viz. *Suddhakriya*, *Devakriya*, etc.

The present *Chaya Raga* seems to be one of the surviving *Chayalaga Ragas* of medieval days. Later, the word *Chayalaga* was changed into *Salaga*. From the medieval times onwards the word *Chaya* came to be combined with the names of some *Ragas*, viz., *Chaya Nata* or *Salaga Nata*, *Chaya Goud*, *Chaya Todi* etc.

Another variety of *Ragas* known as *Sankirna Ragas* (mixed melodies) came into vogue a little after Bharata and were current for many centuries afterwards. It was Lochana who for the first time used the word *Sankara* for *Sankirna*, e.g.

*Raga Sankara* or *Sankara Raga*. Venkatamukhi has also used the same word with the same meaning in one or two places and has referred to *Nata Raga* as *Saranga Nata*. The word *Saranga* in many places takes the form of *Saranka*, *Salanka* or *Salanga*, all meaning mixed melody and omitting the word *Nata* once for all.

Let us now see how the word *Saranga* came to signify a variety of the main melody. We do not come across this type in *Sangeeta Ratnakara*, a major work on Indian music. In this book Sarangadeva mentions three varieties of *Nata*. The first one referred to as *Nata* is the second in the list of *Sri Ragamala*; the second is a *Bhasanga* of *Pinjari* which in its turn is *Bhasa* of the *Grama Raga Hindola*. The third is *Chaya Nata*, an *Upanga*, i.e. a component part of *Nata Raga*. So we can conclude that the first one is *Shuddha Nata*, the second the *Chaya Nata* which differs from the first in a few shades, and the third is the *Sankirna Nata*, as it differs from the *Chaya* of *Pinjari*. This classification is almost identical with the definition of the *Grama* and *Bhasa Raga* of *Ratnakara* and can easily be compared to the *Bhasanga-upanga* system. There would therefore be no difficulty if we called the *Upanga* type of the *Ratnakara* the *Chaya* or *Bhasanga* or *Sankirna* or *Shankara Raga* of our later nomenclature.

Thus from the three varieties of *Nata Ragas* of *Ratnakara*, we can find out how the word *Saranga* came to replace the word *Sankirna*. This word, though not found in the *Ratnakara*, certainly occurs in *Sangeet Makaranda*, and the list of *Deshi Ragas* in both these books is almost similar. *Sangeet Makaranda* clearly mentions *Shuddha Nata*, *Chaya Nata* and *Saranga Nata* and does not use the word *Sankirna* for any separate or individual *Raga*.

Sarangadeva, as we know, was a great Sanskrit scholar and we find him introducing many new words in place of the old ones. We also find him correcting and Sanskritising many words from the local languages. Thus he changes *Chokka* into *Shuddha* and *Prenka* into *Hindola* retaining, however, their meanings in the original language. We can, therefore, assume that Sarangadeva purposely evaded the word *Saranga* which

signified only one type of *Deshi Raga*.

The word *Sankara* was, however, in wider currency and, in a more limited sense, it came to be used long before *Sangeet Makaranda* came to be written. *Sangeet Makaranda* must have drawn its list of *Ragas* from some other unspecified source and mistakenly written down *Saranka* for *Sankara*. Some later works also mention *Saranak* which in course of time changed into *Saranga*, as the change of *Ka* to *Ga* is very common to all the Indian languages. The great lexiconist Amara, a contemporary of Kalidas, also used the word *Saranga* to mean 'mixed'.

*Nata* is not the only *Raga* which took the prefix *Saranga*. *Sangeet Makaranda* also speaks of *Saranga Bhairavi* and *Saranga Bhairava* both of which must soon have fallen into disuse as we do not find them referred to in any later works. But *Saranga Nata* marched with the time and at some later date dropped its original name and retained only the prefix. It thus emerged as *Saranga*, a main *Raga* in its own right.

Many *Ragas* were given names pertaining to the god Shiva when this non-Aryan deity was Aryanized and given a niche in the Hindu pantheon. When the Shiva cult became established many new *Ragas* came to be composed and sung in honour of the new god at the various rituals. Such are the *Kedara*, *Sankarabharana* and *Harasringara Ragas*. The last one has become extinct but the first two still exist. The second one survives in the South in its original name, and with its new name *Velaval* in Hindustani music.

*Velaval*, as the name indicates, is an improvement of the word *Vela-ulli* which is for the first time mentioned in the musical treatise *Manosollasa* whose date has been fixed around A.D. 1131. The word *Vela-ulli* points to the Velava tribe among the Tamils, who had migrated from the North and had settled there.

*Mallara Raga* also owes its name to the Shiva lingas named Mallahara or Mallari situated on different hilltops of Karnataka. The name *Malhara Raga* was given to one of the derivatives of *Megh Raga* which according to the Shaivite mythology originated from one of the five mouths of Shiva.

Shiva is called *Mallahari*, i.e. destroyer of the demon Malla. Several other *Ragas* associated with the worship of Shiva's consort came into vogue during this time but at the present time only one, the *Durga*, still survives. The Shiva cult has given us another melody called *Kamod*. *Kamod* means 'that which gives one the thing desired'. One of Shiva's name in Tantra was *Kama*, 'that which is desired'.

Such is the development of Indian music from its humble beginnings. As we proceed further we hardly find in it any semblance of the liturgical music of *Saman*, though our musicologists, both ancient and modern, have never failed to repeat that the *Saman* is the source of all Indian music. The reason for such a statement is that like 'all other systematised thought, music too by a fictitious genealogy traced its descent from the Vedas only for maintaining the fiction of the superiority of Aryan thought.' By this fiction alone it was possible to forget conveniently the debt the Aryans owed to the non-Aryans for their musical knowledge and practice. The borrowing of the folk-tunes to build the art of music has been the practice of almost all the nations as it is an epitome of the principle on which the musical art is based.

Flowers, birds and animals also inspired our ancient composers with new ideas and their names came to be associated with many melodies most of which have now become extinct where Hindustani music is concerned, though in the South they yet retain some of them. Thus *Nagadhwani Raga* ('sound of the cobra') still survives in North Indian music. So are *Bada-Hamsa* ('the sound of the swan'), *Bihag* (referring to a bird) and *Behagra* (meaning 'from bird') still current.

*Piloo*, another North Indian melody of a lighter variety, seems to have been composed either in remembrance of a particular type of tree called *Piloo* (*Salvadora Indica*) or as a tribute to a particular elephantine gait—the Sanskrit word *Piloo* means elephant.

During the puritan, i.e. Brahmanical, revivals from time to time the urge for the Sanskritization of names become a passion with a section of the Hindus and in this process many indigenous traces were wiped out. Thus *Todi*, one of our



surviving popular melodies, became *Taudika* and changed into *Todi* again in the Muslim times. The *Todi*, as its name indicates, must have been a tune originally belonging to the Toda people who are of non-Aryan origin and still survive in certain parts of Chota Nagpur and Madras.

The copyists also helped, from generation to generation, to mutilate or corrupt the original names of the *Ragas* till most of them became unrecognisable in their new names. Thus *Prathama Manjari* of *Sangeet Makaranda* of the ninth century became *Prati Manjari* in *Ragarnava* (A.D. 1363), ultimately becoming *Pata Manjari*. During the period of the revival of folk dialects and their emergence into full fledged languages some *Raga* names also came to be changed. *Desakhya* became *Desakh*, and later took the Hindi form *Deosakh*. Similarly *Mallarika* changed into *Mallar*, *Hamvir* became *Hammir* and *Addana*, *Adana*.

All the *Ragas* bearing the prefix *Mian* were created by Tansen who was known as 'Mian', an honorific title in the Moghul times. *Raga Jaunpur* is so called because it was composed by Sultan Hussain Shirqui of Jaunpur. Many later composers have added their names to the *Ragas* they have either re-created or composed and thus we have *Mira Bai ki Malhar*, *Hussaini Kanhara*, *Ramdasi Mallar*, *Surdasi Mallar*, etc.

There is a class of *Ragas* in Hindustani music which have their endings in *Saga*: *Ramsaga*, *Lacha Saga*, *Nisa Saga*, *Dev Saga*, etc. The word *Saga* is a corruption of the word *Sakha* (friend).

Several other *Raga* names also indicate the source from which they have come. The *Raga Jogiya* is from the yogis or mendicants, *Desh*, *Deshi* or *Deshkar* signifies local or regional, *Bageshri* is a corruption of *Vakshri* (beauty of the speech), an appellation of Shiva. *Jayajayanti* (Hail, O Victorious!) signifies that it was once sung while welcoming the victorious warrior returning from his conquests.

*Kafi*, as the word signifies, is not Sanskrit. All we know is that *Kafi* is a type of composition sung in a particular way by the Sufi poets of Sind where it is still almost an institution. *Paraj* (born of foreigners) must have come into the melodic

hierarchy from some foreign source. Similarly *Svarparada* means 'tune given by the strangers' which we know is an innovation of Amir Khusrau. *Sohini* is the chaste form of the word *Soni*, which means 'beautiful', and has an association with the Punjab. Perhaps it was once associated with the play of Soni Mahiwal, the mythical lover of Punjab.

Thus we find that Indian music is not vibrating with strains of melodies from a single people. Here is a symphony, a rich and grandiose symphony, into which, through long centuries, diverse notes, diverse strains and even contradictory reasons and practices have entered and combined, clashed and recombined to harmonise into one remarkable cohesion and homogeneity by the philosophy of finding 'unity in diversity'.

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## 9. Raga and Ragini

AS THE musical lore developed through the centuries and new tunes came to be added thereto, it was found necessary to re-classify them in such a way as to facilitate comprehension and impart order to the body of musical knowledge. One of the earliest methods devised was to classify the *Ragas* as male and female though no book before *Sangeeta Ratnakara* designated the melodies as such. Even Sarangadeva, the author of *Sangeeta Ratnakara*, did not exactly classify them as *Ragas* and *Raginis* in clear terms. But while giving names to the melodies he gave masculine endings to some and feminine to others thus giving them the semblance of masculinity and femininity. Other writers after him followed the same nomenclature without amplifying the inherent idea or even questioning it.

But it was left to Damodara (fourteenth century), the author of *Sangita Darpana*, to use qualifying terms like *Yoshita* (wife), *Angana* (daughter) and *Varangana* (concubine) in respect of the melodies.

Some later writers developed this idea and introduced sons and daughters-in-law in the *Raga* scheme, thus completing the *Raga* families.

If we study the ancient texts carefully, we find that the male melodies (*Ragas*) were from the very beginning six in number and the appropriate times to sing them were the six seasons of the year. The earliest *Ragas* which we come across are *Bhairava*, *Megha*, *Panchama*, *Nata-Narayana*, *Sri* and *Vasanta* and they were meant to be sung in the summer, rainy,

autumn, early winter, winter and spring seasons respectively. The 'seasons are indeed only of value to the primitive man, because they are related, as he swiftly and necessarily finds out, to his food supply. It is these periods that become the central points, the foci of his interest and the dates of his religious festivals.'<sup>1</sup>

The Aryans borrowed the seasonal strains of the indigenous people, chastened the ideas associated with them to celebrate 'the autumnal merriment at the close of the harvest', 'ravishing hilarity on the appearance of blossoms', 'complete vernal delight in the month of *Madhu* or honey' and expressing the pain of separation during the rainy season when the hard work in the fields prevented the lovers' meeting, and the dry summer which reminded them of the anger of Shiva, the God of destruction. This association of *Ragas* with the seasons is found for the first time in Narada's *Sangeet Makaranda*.

The allocations of the above six *Ragas* to the six seasons were, however, not adhered to for long and they have been changed off and on. But one striking fact is that the number of *Ragas* associated with seasons has always remained constant. No school has ever tried either to increase their number or name a *Raga* unconnected with a season. Let us now try to understand how the idea of associating a *Raga* with a season originated. When agriculture came to occupy a place of importance in the lives of the Aryans newly settled in India, they began to adopt many of the seasonal rites and festivities connected with the fertility cults and agriculture from the indigenous people. This idea of associating melodies with the celebrations is thus far older than Narada's book.

Musical works of different times and schools give different lists of these basic *Ragas*. It was natural that new *Ragas* which came into being from time to time and captured the imagination of the people should take the place of the older ones on account of their popularity. Of the different schools of thought, the school of Someswar or the Shiva Mutt (opinion), Bharata Mutt, Kallinatha Mutt and Hanuman Mutt are most respected. The *Ragas* of Shiva and Kallinatha schools and the times assigned for their singing were identical

though the *Raginis* attributed to each of the male melodies were different. The melodies and the time for the singing of the Bharat and Hanuman Muttas were alike though their *Raginis* differed. But the 'sons' attributed to the Someswar, Kallinatha and Hanuman schools were the same in construction and when they differed they did so only in their nomenclature.

It is, however, a matter for doubt whether the opinions attributed to these authorities are really theirs as they are not found in any book written by them. About the Someswar or the Shiva school practically nothing is known nor does any book by him exist. 'Though Bharata is an authority of hoary antiquity the *Ragas* and *Raginis* ascribed to him had not emerged in his time. This must, therefore, be some other Bharata or it might be that his name has been given to a body of opinion to lend authority to it.'<sup>2</sup> Kallinatha is the great commentator of *Sangeeta Ratnakara*. But in his book we do not come across the opinion ascribed to him. Hanuman who is stated to be the author of the Hanuman Muttas is purely a legendary figure and the opinions are ascribed to him only to impart weight to them.

When we study the male *Ragas*, we find that the *Raga Bhairava* was associated with the worship of Shiva and this rite in ancient times was held in the month of Aswin (September-October). With the revival of the Tantric cult this was replaced by the worship of Durga, the consort of Shiva. Shiva worship was thereafter shifted to the month of Baisakh (April-May) which is current even now in certain parts of North India and the melody too was assigned to the summer time. The best of the early compositions available for this tune are either in praise of Shiva or prayers to him.

The melody *Megha*, which means a cloud, the harbinger of rain, is sung in the rainy month of Ashada and Sravan (June-July). The rainy season is of paramount importance in the lives of agricultural people and festivals to welcome rain are very old and common in several rural parts of North India. Particular types of folk songs are sung even now by their women at the beginning of the rains. The sowing of the crops

which accompanies the first showers were celebrated with great pomp and solemnity and references to it are found in the *Ramayana* of Valmiki. Most of the compositions of this melody are descriptions of various phases of rains.

The melody *Sri*, which also is a name of the presiding deity of wealth, is sung in the month of Agrayayan (October-November). At a very early stage this *Raga* must have been associated with Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, who is worshipped even now in the early winter soon after the harvest. Kashyapa, a writer earlier than Matanga, refers to *Takka Raga* as pleasing to Lakshmi. Perhaps this melody later came to be known as *Sri*.

The *Vasanta Raga* is associated with the spring season (March-April). The festival of spring is of great antiquity and even now is celebrated in two ways. One is the *Vasanti* or *Vasant* festival which is celebrated all over the North when men, women and children don yellow clothes to welcome the advent of the spring season. The other is the festival of *Holi*, when people throw colours on each other while the women sing erotic songs. Many texts refer to *Hindola* either as the generic tune of *Vasanta* or treat the two *Ragas* as one and the same. But with the rise and spread of the Krishna cult *Hindola* was shifted to the month of *Sravana* (July-August) to synchronise with the swing (*Jhulan* or *Hindola*) festival of Krishna.

*Panchama*, as the name suggests, also means the season of spring when the cuckoo sings in the *Panchama* note. But due to some unaccountable reason the *Raga* was shifted to the time when the autumn (*Saradiya* or *Navaratri*) festival is celebrated.

After the Aryan settlement and their intermixture with the local population, there entered into the simple Aryan religious beliefs many cults of the autochthonous people which afterwards took Aryan hues. This was a period of intermixing and synthesis of cultures. Several contrary ideas were sometimes 'consummated as the bride and bridegroom for the good of all sentient beings. It is not a superficial blending of the Hellenic and Indian techniques but a crossing and

fertilisation of two different spiritual tendencies.”<sup>3</sup>

Many of the musical texts say that five of the six *Ragas* emanated from the five mouths of Shiva. ‘*Bhairava* from his mouth *Aghore*, *Sri* from *Sadyojata*, *Vasanta* from *Vamadeva*, *Panchama* from *Tatpuruṣa* and *Megha* from *Ishana*. *Nata-narayana*, the remaining *Raga*, was born out of the mouth of *Parvati*.’ *Brihajjabal Upanishad* too refers to the five faces of Shiva. Here the five mouths have been designated as the sources of the five elements and five colours. The influence of the Phallic cults, prevalent among natives of the land, can thus be seen in the concepts of music also.

Many of the concepts and techniques of Indian music are often found associated with *Tantras* and *Yoga Shastras*. The source of music, according to the *Yoga Shastra*, is *Nada* which consists of *Na* (which means *Prana*, life-breath) and *Da* (which means *Agni*, fire). The conception of *Nada* is inseparably connected with the *Kundalini* or the spiral energy which when awakened starts from the *Muladhara* (basic plexus) and reaches the crown of the head. It is identified with *Kamakala* or sex-energy in the *Tantras*.

The spiral configuration of sound conforms to the latest scientific opinion as we are told that it is propagated in the air by means of small whirlwinds and not in spherical waves.

This existence of spiral norm in sound obviously has a right-handed (*Dakshinavarta*) and left-handed (*Vamavarta*) polarity and a neutral form where the two types are equally balanced. This must have been realised by Indians from times immemorial. They thought: if the sounds can be classified into male, female and neuter ones, why not the melodies?

And so when the concept of the *Raga-Ragini* crystallised they were endowed with *Dhyanas* (mental pictures) depicting their outward forms (*Rupa*) and expressing their inherent attributes (*Guna*) and sentiment. The Sanskrit word for meditation is *Dhyana* which means ‘creating’ or ‘causing to be’ and points to the real nature of value of the symbolisation process.

The distinction between *Ragas* and *Raginis* were also based on their emotional values. The *Ragas*, according to Narada,

express wonder, courage, anger, and the *Raginis* depict love, laughter and sorrow, and the neuter ones, fear, disgust and peace.

Most of the male melodies named by earlier writers were mostly pentatonic and the pentatonic scale is most primitive. The primitive scales are most passionate and elemental as compared to the other scales.

The rational distinctions of *Raginis* were that they were derivations from the *Ragas* or rather diminutive *Ragas* using accidentals which the main *Ragas* never employed.

The *Raga-Ragini* relationship is undoubtedly partially a question of musical relationship, but the essential quality of the relation of the *Ragas* to the *Ragini* is displayed in the specific effects, the special condition which is called to life.

We may now examine the source of giving human forms to the *Ragas*. The simple explanation is that 'since we are men we cannot escape the necessity of conceiving everything in terms of our experience.'<sup>1</sup> The same motives and impulses which go to the creation of the various gods and goddesses all over the world are responsible for the personification of the melodies too. "Theistic belief depends on man's projection of his own ideas and feelings into nature. It is the personification of non-personal phenomena. And this personification is God's major premise."<sup>2</sup> Vedanta also stresses the same point when it says that man who himself is the subject of creation creates even God. Because of the reality of the existence of the creation, a creator can be imagined. The Universe is a *Leela* or act of play of a vast mind. We all know that the sentiment and the subtle ideas expressing themselves through the material symbols help to have a clear comprehension of the idea or feeling. Similarly why then should not the *Raga*-forms created by the musician help him to express the emotions and feelings inherent in the *Ragas* which his mind's eye can see?

The melodies seek to express the soul states or the inner experiences of man. These melody forms seek to give an outward form to the inward visions remoulding them to 'natural shapes to express the psychic truth with the greatest possible



purity and power of outline. The *Raga* forms are thus the physical transmutations of psychical states.<sup>6</sup> In the words of Tagore 'that which cannot be expressed otherwise can only be told through music. A thought which seems commonplace in its analysis acquires a deeper sense in music.'

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## 10. Ragas round the Clock

ONE OF THE unique characteristics of Indian music is the assignment of definite times for singing definite melodies. In India each *Raga* or major melody is in tune with a generic human mood or sentiment that nature in a particular season and time of day and night arouses in men and women. Each *Raga*, therefore, contains distinctive notes associated with particular moods and emotions excited by the seasonal cycle in human hearts. Each *Raga* again in its turn comprises five or six tender forms of the major melody—*Raginis*—conceived as female because of their subordination to the *Ragas* for their basic tonal structure, thus differentiating the respective melodies of dawn, early morning, late morning, noon, twilight, evening, early night, midnight and late night.

This association of *Ragas* with the particular hours of the day and night, though it was first expressed by Narada, may have had its origin at an earlier period and taken a long time to be genuinely accepted by the public.

It was Sarangadeva who more than others specifically connects the *Ragas* with particular times. In his description of the older *Ragas*, after explaining their constructional characteristics he suggests the appropriate times for their singing. According to him *Shuddha Kaisika* is to be sung in the first part of the day of autumn while *Raga Bhotta* is to be sung in the last part of the day in autumn. The *Raga Malva-Kaisika* is to be sung in the first part of the day in the summer. He goes on to allocate times for the various other *Ragas*.

In the beginning music was confined to rituals, worship and prayers; and as specific seasons and hours of day and night were fixed for the different religious rites and ceremonies the music relating to these rites came to be associated with such times. Later this association came to be crystallised into rigid rules.

In course of time music ceased to be confined to religion and ritual and became secular and the courts of kings became their abode. Thereupon the original rules relating to time were slackened and revised. It was stated 'that on the stage and by the order of kings a *Raga* can be sung at any time and it will not be a violation of the rule.'

But there is another aspect also. We know that music is not only emotional but also psychological in its effects. We know that *Shrutis* are all named according to their psychological nuances and the notes are intended to convey and echo subtle shades of different sentiments, feelings and emotions. The *Ragas* thus emerge as the suggestive sound pictures of the various aspirations, sentiments, emotions and passions. But is there any connection between the emotions and sentiments of a human being on the one hand and the time factor on the other? It is our daily experience that our moods and emotions have much to do with time. The emotional evocative effect of the morning is quite different from that of the noon or the evening or the dusk or midnight. Different moments of the day arouse and stimulate different moods and sentiments. Similarly the mental and emotional impulses and responses in the spring are different from those in autumn or winter or during rains. Thus the time theory, we can reasonably believe, was founded and developed on such a basis since we know that music is partly a psychological transmutation expressing a physiological condition.

According to the ancient Indian 'Science of Longevity' Man's body is dominated by three elements, *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata*, which work in a cyclic order of rise and fall during the 24 hours of the day. The waxing and waning of these three elements also differ with the seasons.

One may also notice that the course of human respiration

undergoes many changes with the change of time and season and it may have been found difficult to express certain combinations of tones and notes at certain hours of the day. It is, however, for a doctor-cum-musician to test the validity of this concept in modern times. But the ancients believed in the diurnal and nocturnal effects of the music and therefore it has been said that 'one loses his health both by singing and listening to a *Raga*, not executed in its proper time.'

This hourly apportionment of melodies is based on certain conditions which cannot be defined by any objectification but can be made clear by illustration. Indians never demanded from their noon-day *Ragas* evocation of the feeling of burning heat but 'the noon-day *Raga* of summer is to correspond to its subject only in so far as it should hold an enhancing mirror to the real conditions which one passes through.' '*C'est la musique du corps astral*,' said a French artist about Indian music. It is a wide, immeasurable world in which the states of soul take the place of object.

But the hours assigned to the different melodies changed from time to time, the morning *Ragas* of the old days becoming the evening *Ragas* at later times. Thus *Bhupali* which, according to *Sangit Darpana*, was an early morning *Raga* is now sung by the northerners in the evening, while the South Indians who call it *Mohana* still sing it in the morning. There are many other such instances. This is perhaps partly due to the fact that the rigid rules of the early times had to be slackened when the melodies had to be sung at any time by royal command or powerful patrons.

It must be confessed that no ancient or medieval writer on the subject has given any rational explanation for prescribing a specific time for singing a specific melody. It was left to the late Pt. Bhatkhande to explain the rules generally observed by Indian musicians and throw light on this interesting subject. A day of 24 hours is first divided into two parts, viz. day and night. The *Ragas* sung during the day are called *Dinageya* (to be sung during the day) or *Suryamsa* (solar melody) and the *Ragas* to be sung during the night are called *Ratrigeya* (to be sung during the night) or

*Chandramsa* (lunar melodies). The hour at the end of the night and just at the beginning of the day and vice versa are called *Sandhikshan* or twilight hours. The former is called *Prataha-Sandhi* or morning twilight and the latter *Sayam-Sandhi* or evening twilight. And the melodies to be sung during the daylight hours are called *Sandhiprakash Ragas* or melodies that indicate twilight time.

The day is divided into eight *Praharas* (watches), each of three hours' duration. The *Ragas* are classified according to their constituent sharp and flat tones which can be divided into the following three groups:

- a) *Ragas* that contain *Re(D)* and *Dha(A)* flat;
- b) *Ragas* that use *Re(D)*, *Ga(E)* and *Dha(A)* unmodified;
- c) *Ragas* in which *Ga(E)* and *Ni(B)* are flats.

When we study the hours of the day and night apportioned to various melodies we find them assigned as under:

- 1) The morning twilight or dawn which begins at 4 a.m. and lasts till 7 a.m. is the time for the *Ragas* of the first group, i.e. those that take *Re* and *Dha* flats.
- 2) The first watch of the day begins at 7 a.m. and ends at 10 a.m. and the *Ragas* prescribed for this period are those of the second group, i.e. those which have unmodified *Re*, *Ga* and *Dha*.
- 3) The second watch is from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and *Ragas* of this period have *Ga* and *Ni* flats, i.e. those of the third group.
- 4) The third watch is from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and the *Ragas* of this time also use *Ga* and *Ni* flats. These and others mentioned above are called *Dinageya Ragas*.
- 5) The evening twilight hours are from 4 a.m. and the *Ragas* sung at this period use *Re* and *Dha* flats (first group).
- 6) The first watch of the night is from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and the *Ragas* of these hours have *Re*, *Ga* and *Dha* unmodified (second group).

- 7) The second watch of the night lasts from 10 p.m. to 12 midnight and the *Ragas* of this duration take on the flats *Ga*, *Ni* (third group).
- 8) The third watch of the night is from 1 a.m. to 4 a.m. The *Ragas* of this period also use *Ga* and *Ni* flats.

The chief characteristic of the twilight group of *Ragas* is that though they take *Re* and *Dha* flats they have their differences. The evening twilight *Ragas* use a sharp *Madhyam* (*F*). This sharp *F* therefore is looked upon as the guiding note (*Audava-Darsika*). The function of the note *F* has been very picturesquely described by Venkatamukhi in his *Chaturdandi Prakasika* thus: 'Just as by a drop of curd, a jar of sweet milk is converted to a quality of curd, so by the introduction of the sharp *F* all *Purvanga* (forenoon) melodies are turned into *Uttaranga* (afternoon) melodies.' As a general rule all the morning *Ragas* are without the use of this particular note while the evening and night melodies have an abundance of it.

There are however a few morning *Ragas* which use the note *F* sharp; but its use is either very sparse or is overshadowed by other *Prachhanniya* (powerful) note or notes.

In the melodies of the dawn *Re* and *Dha* flats are predominant. Next in importance are *Ma(F)* and *Pa(G)*, *Ni(B)* and *Ga(E)* playing a minor role.

In the *Ragas* of the first watch of the day which use unmodified *Re(D)*, *Ga(E)* and *Dha(A)*, the notes *Ga(E)* and *Dha(A)* are important and they act mostly as sonant or consonant. The rest, except *Ni*, occupy a secondary place.

In the *Ragas* of the second watch of the day, the *Ga(E)* and *Ni(B)* are flats. So are the notes *Dha(A)* and *Re(D)*. In this group of melodies *Ga* and *Dha* are the significant notes along with *Ma(F)* and *Pa(G)*, *Ni* always staying in the background.

In the next group of *Ragas* we find the note *Ga* becoming sparse and *Re* improving its position slightly. In the ascendant of this group *Ga* is omitted but in the descendant it is quite prominent.

Next in order comes the *Sarang* group of *Ragas* in which *Re* and *Ni* predominate conjointly with *Ma* and *Pa*. *Ga* and *Dha* are totally omitted and this is a feature of both the midday or midnight *Ragas*. The note *Re* becomes very important as it acts as sonant.

Next in order comes the *Raga* group sung in the third watch of the day. Their period is from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. In this group *Ga* and *Ni* are flats. In the first part of this afternoon we notice a gradual emergence of the note *Ga* to a predominant position forming a kind of alliance with *Ni* which is flat. In this group of *Ragas* the notes *Ma* and *Pa* predominate over the whole structure of the *Ragas* subordinating the powerful note *Re* of the *Sarang* group to a considerable extent. This is a sign of the advent of evening.

The last *Raga* of each of the above groups is generally of a type which is called *Paramela Pravesaka*, meaning 'entering into the group other than its own'. It has been defined as *Dwi Rupī Swara Samyukta*, i.e. possessing two types or sets of notes. *Multani* is a good example of this. In this *Raga*, the presence of *Ga* flat on the one hand and *Re* and *Dha* flats on the other and the presence of *Ma* sharp denote the approach of the evening. In the first group of notes the use of *Ga* indicates the notes used during the second and third watches of the day or night, while the use of *Re* and *Dha* flats indicates an evening *Raga* with its *F* sharp. These *Paramela Pravesak Ragas* hold a key position in the time theory of North Indian music.

In the noon period *Ragas* the use of *Re* and *Dha* notes are very weak while in the afternoon (1 p.m. to 4 p.m.) *Ragas* they are omitted altogether. In the *Ragas* of the last part of the day the notes *Ga*, *Ma* and *Pa* become prominent.

In the *Sandhya* or dusk melodies we find the *Re* flat more prominent and *Ga* rather weak in the early part of this period. But in the later part of evening *Ragas*, *Ga* becomes more prominent aided by *Ni* while *Dha* is brought almost to a neutral position.

With the end of the *Sandhiprakash Ragas* and the emergence of the night melodies (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) we find the

unmodified use of *Re*, *Ga* and *Dha*. In this group we still find *Gandhara* holding its head high along with *Ni*, *Sa* and *Pa*.

In the next group of the early night melodies we find again *Re* coming into prominence, driving *Ga* to a weaker position. *Sa*, *Ma*, *Pa* are very strong but *Dha* and *Ni* maintain a neutral position.

In the *Ragas* sung between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. we find that sometimes *Re* predominates and sometimes *Ga*. As a rule when *Re* is found to be more important and strong, the *Ga* automatically becomes weaker, and vice versa.

In the group of *Ragas* prescribed for 10 p.m.-12 midnight we find in the forefront of this period *Re* and *Ga* dominate off and on but not persistently. But with the advent of midnight melodies, specially the *Kanada* and *Malhar* group, we again witness the emergence of the dominant *Re* as in the noontime *Ragas*.

It is necessary to illustrate here the distinction between two musical terms commonly used in the Hindustani music, viz. *Purvanga Pradhana* and *Uttaranga Pradhana Ragas*. Those that take the sonant from the first tetrachord are *Purvanga Pradhana* and those that use from the second tetrachord are known as *Uttaranga Pradhana Ragas*. The former relate to the period from midnight to 11 a.m. while the latter are scheduled for the part of the day from noon to 11 p.m.

The *Ragas* which become *Purvanga Pradhana* from the noontime again begin to change into *Uttaranga* ones from the midnight thus making easier the change-over to morning twilight melodies in some of which *Re* and *Dha* are flats.

To summarise:

1. *Ragas* with the notes *Re* and *Dha* flats coupled with sharp *Ga* and *Ni* are meant for the twilight time.
2. The unmodified *Re*, *Ga* and *Dha* find a place in the melodies of the first part of a day or night.
3. *Ga* and *Ni* flats play a significant role in the midday and midnight melodies.
4. The presence of sharp *Ma* is the feature of an evening



or night melody.

5. *Purvanga Pradhana Ragas*, i.e. Ragas strong in the first tetrachord, are for afternoon or early part of the night.
6. An *Uttaranga Pradhana Raga*, i.e. a melody strong in the second tetrachord, is for the latter part of the night.
7. The importance and preponderance of the unmodified *Re* in a melody, specially of the *Sarang* group, suggests noontime or midnight.
8. *Sa*, *Ma* and *Pa* are the important notes of a *Raga* meant for the last part of the day.
9. The absence of *Re* and *Dha* in the ascendant of a *Raga* is the feature of an afternoon melody.
10. The subordination of *Dha* and *Ga* is invariably found in a noontime *Raga*.

#### WORKS CONSULTED

Bhatkhande: *Sangeet Padarti*, Vols. I-IV

Bhatkhande: *Sangeet Padarti*, "Srimallakshyasangeetam"

## 11. The Drone

INDIAN MUSIC, whether vocal or instrumental, is invariably accompanied by the drone of the tambura. This latter controls the pitch of the music, providing an effective background, and ensures stability which in the West is furnished by the harmony. It may be supplied by one of the two drums tuned either in unison or apart on an octave. The veena, sarangi, sitar and other stringed instruments possess their own drone strings. The tambura, however, is regarded as the most satisfactory drone instrument.

‘The tambura is of the lute tribe, but without frets. The four very long strings are fitted with simple resonators—shreds of wool between the string and the bridge known as Jewari—which are the source of their life, and the strings are continuously sounded, making a pedal point background, very rich in overtones, and against this dark ground of infinite potentiality the song stands out like an elaborate embroidery. The tambura must not be regarded as a solo instrument, nor an object of separate interest like any other accompaniments; its sound is rather the ambient in which the song lives and moves and has its being.’<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to say when the tambura came into vogue as no early musical authority mentions it by name. Though the unison of the voice with that of the veena and flute has been stressed and commended as pleasing from the very early times, no mention is made of the tambura in either *Natya Shastra* or any other subsequent book for a long time. Sarangadeva, who discussed at length the problem of the drone in his *Sangeeta*

*Ratnakara* does not mention tambura or its like anywhere. The various types of veenas that he has described are not endowed with drone strings. A study of the ancient musical texts reveal that the flute, besides being one of the main musical instruments, also functioned as a drone. A good flute player according to Sarangadeva, besides presenting the melody, should keep the three octaves manifest. Kallinatha, too, endorses this opinion. In the *Nartanadhyaya* (Chapter on Dancing), Sarangadeva enjoins that all other music should stop when the vocalist sings to the octave prescribed by the flute player. He also states that when the flutist plays the notes of the middle octave there is a perfect blending of the notes of the veena, the flute and the human voice. This indicates that even in Sarangadeva's time the flute was tuned to the middle register when accompanying the human voice and served the purpose of the drone.

We know that the several Austro-Asiatic people call themselves 'the issues of the gourd.'<sup>2</sup> The *Mahabharata* also speaks of a tumbu or tumbura tribe. This name of a people was apparently derived from *tumba* (gourd). The Austro-Asiatic myth must have passed into the Aryan tradition by this time, and the musical instrument used by these pre-Aryan people must have been taken and adapted in the Aryan musical culture.

As in the case of Western music the primal unity of Indian music is the tonic or drone. It helps to establish the tonality by supplying the background for comparison or contrast of the notes with those elements which go to make its harmony a whole *Amsa*; or the notes which are related to it as *Sama-vadi*, *Vivadi* or *Anuvadi* supply the sense of contrast which lends a peculiar character to the *Raga* over and above the unity of the melody, which thus proceeds from freedom and not from necessity.

It is well known that a chord or a melodic phrase has a determinate root, which is easily realised even when the music is sung without any accompaniment because the human ear has an unconscious natural capacity to analyse the compound tones into partials. To make this unconscious analysis per-

ceptible, the phrases and chords of music have to be sung on the background of their root-notes functioning as tonics. To achieve this successfully the accompanying, or rather the background, tonics have to be sustained and lengthened, which enables the singer to check and compare his voice to avoid *the beats which cause dissonances*.

*The drone is not a single composite note in which are merged, besides the primes, several harmonics in the form of upper partials and combination notes. Of course the primes always predominate both in intensity and duration, especially the note of the two middle wires Pa(G) and Ma(F) serving as the base of the secondary note. The drone is thus a harmony engendered by the primes, their upper partials and their synthesis, the combined notes.*

Whenever the music is sung to the accompaniment of such drones, a comparison or contrast of the notes of the music occurs with the constituent of the harmony produced by the drone. In this act of comparison or contrast only such notes compare well as possess a direct relationship with the elements of the harmony. These are, of course, the consonances; the others which do not do so, due to engendering of beats, are dissonances.

A student of music as well as of the property of sound knows that the upper partials higher than the sixth are hardly audible because they are very thin. But when such partials are used by the singer, by their merger with similar ones or powerful notes, they acquire a character very pleasing in effect.

Western musicians never use partials higher than the seventh of the harmonic, as their musical system does not tolerate them. But, on the contrary, the Indian singers, if they are expert, use the septimal interval to distinct advantage. This effect is very enchanting. 'The importance attached to the septimal intervals, i.e., those derived from the seventh harmonic, places the music of India in the first rank of intellectual development of musical art.'<sup>3</sup>

Besides this, the drone serves the following important functions too:

First, the constant use of the drone aids the singer in the correct use of the true harmonic intervals, helping him to comprehend the nature of the dissonances which he can thus use artistically, when necessary, to enhance the beauty of the *Raga*.

Secondly, the use of the drone particularises and strengthens the modal effect and broadens the scope of variation in the *Ragas* having structural affinities.

Thirdly, as Indian music is not harmonic in the Western sense, 'the notes of a chosen scale in India stand out from each other as clearly as the faces of our friends do to the mind's eye.' The drone, by providing this contrast, helps the singer to establish the tonality and tonal relationship between the individual notes and the fundamental ones or the tonic and thus to assert their marked consonance and dissonance.

Some scholars are of the opinion that the drone of the tambura is not meant to be heard by the audience and therefore should be played softer than the song itself. But it is not so. The sound of the tambura must have a pitch equal to, if not greater than, the singing voice. If it is just a little louder it does not matter much, but at no time should it drown the voice of the singer. The music of the singer must be built up against a background of sound flakes generated by the adjustment of the Jewari or the bridge of the tambura. If the tonic is given by two central strings at 240 frequency, then the whole series of tones and overtones that the listener is expected to be conscious of are given by the following pitches: 120, 180 (lower Octave G), 240, 270 (as the upper partial of 120), 360 (both from 120, 180), 450 (as an upper partial of 180), 480 (as an upper partial of 240) and 600 (as an upper partial of 240) leaving the still finer fragments or higher partials for the subconscious mind to conjure up. This is the arrangement when the fifth is the prominent note in a *Raga*. The *Ragas* having the fourth as the prominent note have the lower G changed into lower F (160) with corresponding alteration in the overtones. For enharmonic scales such as *Marwa* and *Hindol*, a still different arrangement is made by altering the string of the lower G (fifth of the lowest

octave or register) to lower *B* (225), thus omitting both the fourth and the fifth from the background to which the music is set. One may call it a harmonic background for a sensitive ear and it is analogous to the canvas on which the artist draws his lines.

#### R E F E R E N C E S

1. Ananda Coomaraswami: *The Dance of Shiva*
2. P. Bagchi: *The Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian*
3. E. Clement: *Elements of Indian Music*

## 12. The Human Voice in Music

VOCAL MUSIC in India has been endowed with a far higher status than instrumental music which has been described as dry instrumentalism (*Sushkam Vadyam*). European musicologists also reached the same conclusion only very recently.<sup>1</sup> A higher status has been accorded to the human voice because it is not only capable of expressing but is better suited to express the whole gamut of human emotions more explicitly than all instruments. Thus singing is more than mere music because besides its human appeal it possesses the power to express the emotional depth of the individual, involving a complete psychophysical release.

To acquire mastery over music it is necessary to learn the 'technique', the first principle of which is full control over the voice. And for this our masters have from the very early times laid great stress on the culture of the musical voice. Bharata, the author of the *Natya Shastra*, has laid down some well-thought-out rules for this. In his opinion only women should sing and men should take to the playing of instruments because 'women are gifted by nature with a melodious voice and men with muscular ability'. He was not dogmatic about it, as he realised that there might be men who could sing well and women who were good on the instruments. 'Any aptitude for instrumental music found in women or musical voice-production in men must be regarded as acquired abilities—not natural,' says Bharata.

To him a naturally melodious voice is not sufficient for the purpose of singing. It is only a cultivated voice which can

tickle the emotions and touch the effective chords in the listeners.

Bharata enumerates the following six qualities which are *sine qua non* of a musical voice. They are: *Sravaka*, *Ghana*, *Snigdha*, *Madhura*, *Svaradhanaravan* and *Tristhanoshobhi*.

*Sravak* has been defined as the quality which makes the voice audible from a distance, thus meaning the volume. For this volume, too, he has fixed a standard which expects the voice to be heard at least from a distance of 32 cubits, i.e., 60 ft.\*

*Ghana* is the steadiness of the tone produced, neither cracking nor fluctuating. This quality wholly depends on the contracture of the larynx. Any nervous or dis-function of the said contracture may cause unsteadiness in the tone production as it is the contracture of the muscles which is responsible for the production of a prolonged note. When there is no such defect, the voice is termed *Ghana*, provided it is musical or *Susvara*.

The stress on the *Susvara* is very important here because in singing it is the preponderance of the tonal element which adds musicality to the voice compared to speech, recitation and dialogue where the proper intonation only counts.

Bharata delineates the other qualities necessary for the musical voice. It should be composed of a greater or lesser number of notes which are detached from one another. This quality is called *Vidhanavana*; when such (notes) are produced easily (without effort), that (quality) again is termed mellow (*Snigdha*) by those who know '*Satvapurusha*.'

Bharata equates the term *Vidhanavan* with *Svaradhanaravan* both of which mean, or rather indicate, a well-composed musical voice which is found to be constituted not only of one single basic note but of several notes, harmonically related to the basic. These latent notes have been termed *Anunadas* by Bharata.

*Vidhana* is the desirable composition of notes marked by

\*In ancient India a cubit was equivalent to 22 in. as against 18 in. of the present times.



(a) the similarity of notes (*Svarasadrśya*) as of the different *Shadajas* of the three *Saptaks*, (b) consonance (*Anuvaditva*) of notes as between *Sa* and *Ma*, *Sa* and *Pa* etc. and (c) intermediary consonance of notes as between *Sa* and *Ga*, *Re* and *Ma*, *Ga* and *Pa* etc.

The word *Vihina* denotes that the component elements may be less in number, so that, as a minimum, only the original note and others with similar characteristics may remain. This does not indicate *Svaravihina*, meaning 'devoid of notes', because with the above statement he uses the term *Avirakta*, indicating 'not detached', which implies 'intimate' in the sense if not of plurality at least of duality as otherwise the question of intimate relation or non-detachment would not arise at all. *Avirakta* also implies that the side notes should not distract the attention but only the fundamental note should be distinctly audible. It is certain, therefore, that Bharata here is not referring to our so-called 'accentuated' or partials distinguishable by the average musical ear. As for instance, the *Kharaj* string of the modern tambura, though tuned to *Sa* of the lowest or middle Octave, emits the *Ga* of the middle Octave clearly, though sometimes inconveniently as is known to all musicians. This is what is meant by *Virakta*—meaning 'detached'—from the fundamentals, which is a disqualification for the singer's voice.

From the above it is easy to infer that even in the earliest times when musical traditions were just settling down, the music scholars not only knew of the composite characters of the musical tones produced by the human larynx but also the nature and relations of the other tones composing the notes. Bharata's *Anunada* means the note which follows in intimate association with the fundamental.

Having thus dealt with the two aspects of projection and volume on the one hand and tone compositions, mellowness and steadiness on the other, Bharata proceeds to discuss the quality which relates to the range a singer's voice is expected to cover.

Bharata says that it should be *Tristhanashobhimadhuraṅ* ('musical all over the three places'). By *Tristhana* Bharata

means the physiological regions of the three *Saptaks*, or Octaves, known as *Mandra*, *Madhya* and *Tara* respectively, where the notes first originate before finding articulation in the throat. These places are the chest, the throat and the head respectively. Mention of the chest, throat and the head as sound-centres has created a great deal of confusion regarding the difference between the production and actual articulation of musical notes. Characterising these three tracts as the centres of the three voice-registers implies tracts functioning as some kind of resonators responsible for the peculiarities of the tones in the corresponding three Octaves. Bharata never mentions anywhere the word *Saptak* or Octave because the actual number of notes, according to him, are twenty-two whereas the *Saptak* concept would only give twenty-one notes.

It should be remembered here that 'in India the thing fixed is a group of intervals (intervals between two successive scale-notes) the precise vibration value of which depends on their positions in a progression, not on their relation to a tonic. The scale of twenty-two notes is simply the sum of all the notes used in all the songs as no musician sings a chromatic scale from C to C or a full octave with twenty-two stopping places, for this would be only a *tour de force*'; but these intervals are used in Indian music, which makes it so different.

This concept of three places explains the basis of a composite musical tone in which many subsidiary notes merge with a dominant one to make it a whole or full note. Just as a sweet orange is also sour and bitter to some extent, so also the note that is emitted through the throat is but a summation of many qualities. These different regions produce a few simultaneous notes out of which one becomes the dominant due to the will power, effort and concentration of the singer. That is how the various compositions of notes like similarity (*Sadrasya*), consonance (*Samvadtva*) and medial consonance (*Anuvadtva*) are achieved. This makes it clear how a note becomes *Vidhanvan* or well-composed.

The verse in which Bharata postulates the principles of the final test reads that 'the voice is called melodious which

attains accuracy of note-production even in the highest position and that voice is called *Tristhanashobhimadhura* which without fail attains melodiousness all over the three places.'

From this it is easy to realise that by the three *Sthanas* Bharata meant the three *Saptaks*. Thus the highest position indicates *Tar* or upper Octave. From the above quotation it is clear that in this verse Bharata deals with the important question of the range of the voice of a singer. To him the first condition is the accurate note-production in the upper Octave though he fixes the minimum range of musical sweetness at two *Saptaks* which is not at all difficult or rare for men and women to attain by practice. But in the latter portion of the verse he is clear that the ideal voice should be able to run through the whole three *Saptaks* maintaining the melodiousness all the way.

If two *Saptaks* suffice, what is the need of a third at all? This is the question which crops up here. It is matter of common knowledge that the ideal is always beyond what is common and easily attainable. Moreover, the ideal presentation of music requires not only a faithful reproduction of a pattern but also the full display of the essential notes by means of decoration (*Alankara*) which, according to Bharata, is indispensable in enhancing the beauty of any musical performance. The decorations are possible within the range of two *Saptaks*, too, but all their splendour and beauty can only be effected fully in three *Saptaks*.

Some time after Bharata and down to the appearance in 1247 of Sarangadeva's *Sangeeta Ratnakara*, there ensued a dark age in Indian music. Sarangadeva fills up the gap. In his book for the first time we find a clear reference to the tone composed of higher partials, indicated by the word *Taranudhavani* (possessing higher partials) which is one of the chief constituent qualities of the ideal musical sound. Thus he was the precursor of what Rameau conjectured 500 years after him and Dr. Helmholtz proved towards the latter part of the 19th century.

He also knew the distinction between the *Pusta* (well-composed) and *Apusta* (not well-composed) notes. He classi-

fied notes known as natural (*Prakriti*) and false (*Vikriti*) and another in which the natural and false combine, making it a distinct note, the artificial (*Kritrima*), which corresponds to falsetto. It is to be remembered here that the second type of tones refers in particular to the composite type of notes produced on musical instruments.

*Ratnakara* sets up a high ideal for the singer. 'He should never sing pressing his teeth, should not shout while singing, should avoid making any sound other than musical notes through the throat when singing, he should sing without any fear and should not frown, should not tremble, should not sing gaping, produce notes with exact *Shrutis*, avoid hoarseness, should be rhythmical, should not raise his head too high, nor lower the chin too low. His veins in the neck should not swell, his cheeks should not be puffed up, he should avoid distortion of the face, he should not shut his eyes, he should avoid being unmelodious, should never make use of the "left out" notes, should pronounce the words of the songs correctly, his voice should run through all the Octaves smoothly, he should shun mixing one *Raga* with the other, he should be fully attentive to his music and should not be nasal.'

The best singer, according to Sarangadeva, is he who 'possesses a melodious voice, is able to express the *Raga*-form easily, knows where to begin and end; knows well to distinguish between various compositions, knows all types of *Alapa*, who can use all *Gamakas* easily, whose voice is under perfect control, knows the *Talas* well, is hard working, knows to distinguish between pure and mixed *Ragas*, knows well the six *Kakus* (modulation and changing of voice due to different emotional effects), can compose a part or two of the song while singing, knows thoroughly the movement of the *Ragas* and uses innumerable rhythms, whose voice does not shake, who can sing in lower Octaves, is capable of enchanting the listener and who is a disciple of traditional masters.'

A man should sing in a manly voice and should not imitate the voice of women, which has become the fashion nowadays. *Mricchakatika*, a drama written in the second century A. D. by Sudraka, gives us a clear insight into the nature of a man's

voice. The hero Charudatta and his courtier Maitreya were returning one night from a musical performance. Asked how he liked the music Maitreya said, 'There are just two things that always make me laugh . . . one of them is the man who tries to sing soft and low—he reminds me of an old priest muttering texts while the flowers in his chaplet dry up.'<sup>2</sup> From this it may be easily realised that the ideal for a man was to sing in his natural voice.

But most of these injunctions are respected more in the breach than in the observance. As the masters often strive for the correct intonations, most of them injure their voices by hard practice and establish their reputation by the correct exposition of the melody. The voice is no more important than handwriting is to a poet, and the audience too is not particular about it; what a musician sings is far more important than his voice itself and its attributes are always determined by what the voice is expected to do. It is the interpretation of the *Raga* that matters, and if that is rendered well the listener can correct and harmonise the rest by his imagination.

Every singer in India is a creative artist in the fullest sense of the word unlike in the West where he is merely a vehicle for the expression of the composer's ideas. The voice is very often used there just like an instrument.

It has been rightly remarked that 'in Europe a young man decides to become a singer if he has a good voice; in India, on the other hand, a young man decides to become a singer if he is musical.'

However, it must be remembered that the voice has its own value, as without it music fails to charm the ordinary man. The common man expects nothing but a momentary joy, a little relief from his preoccupations and, when he fails in obtaining this, his love for music is diminished. Over and above this, when the words of the song too become unintelligible, his love for music is completely gone. The artistes, by their over-stress on the technical and representational side of the *Raga*, fail to give the right expression to the sentiment inherent in the words of the compositions for which a good melodious voice is so necessary.

Melodiousness and good pronunciation are two of the best elements for the expression of the inner meaning of the *Raga* and the song. As a dumb person cannot succeed on the stage, however good he might be at expressing his feelings in pantomime, a singer cannot easily succeed without a good voice and with the mere ability of exposition and intonation. There is an intellectual pride and pleasure in the knowledge of the technicalities—but it is not the joy of understanding and realising the beautiful. When art satisfies the intellect alone, it no longer remains an art but becomes a science simple and pure. The common man only expects an emotional delight, an aesthetic joy, from music, which can only be had from a melodious voice and correct pronunciation. The listener also has a right to know what the musician is singing. A good pronunciation achieves a right tone-production. The words sung would have the penetrating power to touch a chord in the listeners. For this reason alone vocal music appeals to man more than instrumental music, however good the latter may be.

Tansen, in one of his compositions, has laid much stress on *Shuddha Vani*, *Shuddha Mudra*, and *Shuddha Sur*. *Shuddha Vani* means the correct style of singing. *Shuddha Mudra*, meaning the correct gestures of the hands, is not only useful but necessary as 'every feeling contributes in effect to certain special gestures which reveal to us bit by bit the essential characteristic of life movement. All melody is a series of movements and thus gestures are natural to it.'<sup>33</sup> Moreover, in emphasising a certain point or points here and there, they are not only useful but are necessary to control the gesticulations which become unconsciously frequent when the singers are emotionally moved. Reduced to a minimum through the use of *Mudra* they are made artistic in themselves. *Shuddha Sur* means the correct production of tone, but it must be remembered that it should not be at the cost of the melodiousness of the music itself.

One of the factors that has prevented more careful development of tone in the Indian style of voice-production is the system of tuning that obtains in indigenous instruments. Even

the Western violin, when in the hands of Indian executants, is generally tuned in fourths.

In our music the human voice is acknowledged paramount and the accompanying instruments play a very secondary role. Our instruments, partly because of tradition and partly because of the way they are tuned, do not lend themselves readily to changes of pitch or key. Most of our accompanying instruments involve a complete re-tuning for every key shift on the part of the singer—a laborious process which is largely responsible for the fact that most singers give their entire recitals in one key.

As in India the voice is not sub-divided according to pitch or quality, our singers pick a certain pitch and take that as the basis of their entire recital—often to the detriment of the song. One song may be good for the upper reaches of the voice, while another may make demands on the lower registers. It may be argued that our singers develop a wide range and that they do get through their songs, but it is undeniable that it does a good deal of harm to the voice itself.

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### 13. Evolution of Musical Forms

THEORISTS OF ANCIENT India divided music into two classes, *Marga* and *Deshi*. The former, according to them, was the creation of the gods, sung according to well-established rules, and it liberated the soul. It was essentially the music of contemplation and prayer. *Deshi* was sung by all types of people, from princes down to cowherds, for their own pleasure; it did not follow any established set of rules.

While discussing the fundamentals of musical forms our ancients have made use of two words, *Ouchitya* and *Lalitya*, meaning propriety and gracefulness respectively. They considered as proper any action which is motivated by an ideal and proves useful when completed. Thus propriety combines in itself both idealism and utility. Coupled to this is *Lalitya* which was added by the skilful weaving of the musical notes into a composition set in a rhythmic pattern.

After formulating the basic canons of melodic compositions the ancient theorists propounded that good music should also have these other qualities:

- i) *Vyakta*, i.e., should be fully expressive.
- ii) *Purna*, i.e., should contain proper *Gamakas* of necessary notes in all the voice registers.
- iii) *Prasanna*, i.e., the meaning should be clear.
- iv) *Sukumar*, i.e., should be graceful.
- v) *Alankrita*, i.e., it should possess the requisite embellishments.
- vi) *Sama*, i.e., *varnas* should be properly set to rhythm.



- vii) *Surakta*, i.e., it should possess the harmony of the combined sounds of venu (flute), veena and the human voice.
- viii) *Slakhna*, i.e., fineness of expression in the upper and lower notes both under a slow and fast rhythm.
- ix) *Vikrishta*, i.e., the use of clear high-pitched note when necessary.
- x) *Madhur*, i.e., should be sweet.
- xi) *Lavanya*, i.e., the infusion of grace, charm, beauty or other artistic quality. It has been compared to the liquid lustre which makes the pearl shine forth and but for which it would be no better than stones.

In his *Brihaddeshi*, which is our most important book on lay music, Matanga mentions seven kinds of *Geetis* prevalent in his time.

- i) *Shuddha Geeti*. It moves in the *Mandra* (low), *Madhya* (middle) and *Tara* (high) registers. It consists of straight sporting notes and *Shrutis*. It is free from the influence of foreign *Jatis* always following its own.
- ii) *Raga Geeti*. It uses sportive and variegated *Gamakas*, issuing from the chest, with pleasing combination of *Swaras*. In this four *Varuas* are used to brighten up the *Geeti*.
- iii) *Sadharana Geeti*. It uses *Prayogas* (embellishment) which are soft and subtle and the notes are well mixed with *Kakus* (tonal modifications).
- iv) *Bhasha Geeti*. Here the notes are smooth and graceful, *Kakus* colouring them. The *Kampitas* (trills) used are delicate and illumined with *Malavkaku*. The *Gamakas* are sportive and artistic and consist of well-controlled phrases.
- v) *Vibhasha Geeti*. It consists of sportive and colourful *Gamakas* of various kinds. The *Kampitas* issue from the chest and belong to *Tara* and *Atitara* (ultra high) according to the fancy of the singer.

The other two types of *Geetis* have not been defined or explained by Matanga.

Commenting on the *Geetis* Kallinatha remarks that 'ten kinds of composition derive their names from their characteristic of pleasing. Among them *Shuddha Geeti* consists of straight and smooth *Swaras*; and *Bhinna* of subtle, crooked notes and sweet *Gamakas*; and *Gaudi*, of deep notes with *Gamakas* in the three Octaves and *Svaras* sportive with *Uhati* (i.e. notes from the low register). The *Vesara*, of restless movement in all the three Octaves, with *Uhati Kampita* notes in the *Mandra* Octave, is of quick movement. The *Sadharana Geeti* shares all these characteristics. These *Geetis* have their application to notes and are different from *Magadhi* and other *Geetis* which are mainly concerned with *Pada* (song) and *Tala* (time).'

The post-Matanga writers classified music into *Geeta* and *Alapa*. Notes of music characterised by ten *Lakshanas* are *Ragas*; according to them the *Geeta* possesses four and sometimes five or six component parts called *Angas*; and the *Alapa* is the improvisation or elaboration of the *Raga*.

The *Geetas* were also called *Prabhandas*. They consisted of *Angas* or limbs, also called *Dhatus*, which varied from two to six and were flexible by nature. It was immaterial whether they were rhythmical or not, as long as they followed some time-measure.

The sections of *Angas* of the ancient *Prabhandas* were called (1) *Udgraha* or the Preliminary (introductory); (2) the *Melapak*, (literally 'joining') which linked *Udgraha* with the next part; (3) The *Dhruva*, i.e. the permanent feature, and (4) the *Abhog*, i.e. the completion.

In some varieties of *Prabandhas* another section called *Antara* (intermediate) was inserted between *Dhruva* and *Abhog*. When a *Prabandha* consisted of only two sections, the *Udgraha* and the *Dhruva*, it was called *Dwidhatu Prabandha*. *Prabandhas* having three component parts were called *Tridhatu Prabandhas* and possessed the *Udgraha*, *Dhruva* and *Abhog* sections. *Prabandhas* having all the four parts were called *Chaturdhatu Prabandhas*. In these cases

the *Antara* part was inserted and the *Melapak* portion omitted as these two sections were never used in one and the same composition.

All these five *Dhatus* are found under one name or the other in the present-day music also. The remnant of *Udgraha* can be traced in the *Govindachandrika* in *Bengali Kirtana*, though somewhat mixed with *Melapak*. In the South Indian music of today these types of compositions are furnished by the following:

- 1) Tyagaraja's *Divyanama Kirtanas*, viz., '*Pahi Ram-chandra*' and '*Sri Raghuvara Dasarathe*' in the *Sankarabharanam Raga* are good examples of *Dwidhatu Prabandha*.
- 2) The *Kriti* '*Sarsa Samadhana*' in *Kapinarayani Raga* is a good illustration of the *Tridhatu Prabandha* and the *Kriti* '*Amba ni Charanam*' in *Anandabhairavi-raga* is a good piece of the *Chaturdhatu Prabandha*.

*Prabandhas* again were classified into *Niryukta Prabandhas*, i.e. those which conformed to a specified *Raga*, *Tala* and metre; and *Aniryukta Prabandhas* which did not conform to the rules of a specified *Raga*, *Tala* and metre.

Of the various classifications of the old *Prabandhas* that were prevalent, *Suda*, *Ali Krama*, and *Viprakarna* were the most important.

*Suda* contained eight types of *Prabandhas*, viz., *Ela*, *Karan*, *Dhenki*, *Vartani*, *Jhombar*, *Lambha*, *Rasak* and *Ektali*.

*Ali* contained twenty-four types of *Prabandhas*, viz., *Varna*, *Varnaswara*, *Gadya*, *Kaibad*, *Ankacharini*, *Kand*, *Turaglila*, *Gajalila*, *Dwepadi*, *Chakrabal*, *Krounchapada*, *Swarartha*, *Dhanikuttini*, *Arya*, *Gatha*, *Dwipathak*, *Kalahansa*, *Totak*, *Ghata*, *Britha*, *Matrika*, *Ragakadambak*, *Panchtaleswar* and *Talarnav*.

We come across another thirty-four types of *Prabandhas* belonging to the *Viprakarna* class, viz., *Sri Ranga*, *Sri Vilas*, *Panchvangi*, *Panchanan*, *Matilak*, *Tripadi*, *Chatuspadi*, *Shat-*

*padi*, *Vastusanga*, *Viuvaya*, *Tripath*, *Chaturmukh*, *Singhalila*, *Hanslila*, *Dandak*, *Kanduk*, *Trivangi*, *Haravilashak*, *Sudarsan*, *Swaranka*, *Srivardhini*, *Vadan*, *Charchari*, *Chariya*, *Padhdhari*, *Rahari*, *Virasri*, *Mangalachar*, *Dhaval*, *Mangal*, *Obi*, *Loli*, *Dholtari* and *Danti*.

Many of these names followed the prosodical and rhetorical schemes and hence were called so. Many of these metrical names are similar to the *Talas* even now used in the *Kirtana* type of music sung in Bengal.

When the stress of metrical schemes in the compositions became irksome many of these compositions fell through and others which could be so treated were turned into time measures.

There was another type of *Prabandha* known as *Swarartha*—in the *Shuddha* type of which only solfas were sung like our modern *Sargams* and in the *Misra* type the words and solfas were combined as in some of our present combinations.

Some of the *Prabandhas* contained the following six *Angas*:

1. *Svara*—solfa passage.
2. *Biruda*—exclamations or praise of the deity or the person in whose laudation the piece had been composed. In this, the sound syllable given by *Khala* types of instruments (i.e. percussion instruments) were imitated, abounding in words, *Ha*, *Hu*, *Hau* etc.
3. *Pada*—words of the compositions.
4. *Tenaka*—auspicious phrases like *Tana*, *Tena* which are suggestive of *Om*, *Tat Sat* and *Tatvamasī*.
5. *Pata*—rhythmical sounds in imitation of those given out by *Rudra Veena*, conch and drum, the precursor of the modern *tribat*.
6. *Tala*—time measure.

Musical compositions, consisting of six, five, four, three or two sections from the six *Angas*, came to be known as *Medini*, *Anandini*, *Dipini*, *Bhavini* and *Taravali* respectively.

In the North Indian music system, compositions in the above styles have been lost permanently. But as the South

pursued the ancient traditions for a far longer time, compositions in the above styles were prevalent till very lately and they are still available and sung. Those who are interested can look to the following compositions of Carnatic music to have an idea of the ancient *Prabandha* music, the memory of which still haunts every music lover:

- (1) *Medini Jati Prabandha*—Ramaswamy Dikshitar's compositions *Chands Sela* set in *Hamsadhwani Raga* and *Matya Tala*.
- (2) *Anandini Jati Prabandha*—Pallair Sheshayyar's *Til-lana* in *Dhanyasi Raga* and *Adi Tala*. It consists of all *Angas* except the *Tenaka*.
- (3) *Dipini Jati Prabandha*—the *Viriboni Varnam* in *Bhairavi Raga* is a classic example of this type. It has all the four *Angas* except *Pata* and *Tenaka*.
- (4) *Bhavini Jati Prabandha*—the *Kriti* which begins with the words '*Nimadi Challanga*' set in *Ananda-bhairavi Raga* is a good illustration of this type and it has all the three *Angas* of *Svara*, *Pada* and *Tala*.
- (5) *Taravali Jati Prabandha*—compositions such as *Jatis-varam* are examples of this type as they possess only two *Angas* of *Svara* and *Tala*.

After these types fell into disuse, there came the others: *Shuddha*, *Chayalaga* and *Kshudra*.

As we understand from the old texts the *Shuddhas* were a type by themselves. But *Chayalagas* were those which were made captivating by adding variety to them. This later came to be known as *Salag*. The speciality of this class is that it could be sung in nine *Talas*, viz., *Dhruvak*, *Manthak*, *Parti-manth*, *Nisaruk*, *Rasak*, *Pratital*, *Ektalika*, *Yati* and *Jhoomri* or *Adi*, *Yati*, *Nisaruk*, *Adda*, *Tripud*, *Rupak*, *Jhampak*, *Manth* and *Ektala*.

*Kshudra* was a small variety having four parts including *Udgraha* and *Melpak*, which had again four varieties of their own, viz., *Chitrapada*, *Chitrakala*, *Dhruvapada* and *Panchali*.

*Chitrapada* was that variety of song which was not limited

by the frame of any musical composition but had its own special constructional scheme.

*Chitrakala* contained an equal number of letters in *Udgraha* and *Melpak* but not in its *Dhrupada* which could either be bigger or smaller. This section, it would seem, allowed the change of *Tala* in a song and it must have come to be called *Chitrakala* as the word *Kala* means *Matra*.

For this difference in the word the one was called *Chitrapada* and for the change in *Matra*, *Chitrakala*.

*Sangeeta Ratnakara* gives us a further glimpse of the evolution of musical forms. Reference has been made in this book to *Shruti*, *Niti*, *Sena*, *Kervita* and *Champu* types of music, all but the last of which now seem to be extinct. *Champu* still survives in Orissa in a corrupted form and contains two sections. Other forms referred to are *Ela*, *Vasak*, *Damva*, *Kaivab*, *Kanda*, *Gajlila* and *Krounchapada* but no details are available of them.

There was another kind of music which persisted for some time. Known as *Ragkadamba* it was of two classes, *Nandavarta* and *Swastik*. *Nandavarta* contained two sections and each section was sung in a different *Raga* and time-measure. In course of time this type of composition came to be known as *Ragamala* and *Talferta*; it has become almost extinct in North India now. *Ragamalas* are however still prevalent in South India.

*Dhruva*, *Mantha*, *Pratimatha* are the other types of music that survived for long but their special characteristics are now used as embellishments in the playing of the veena, their names being corrupted as *Dhua*, *Matha*, *Pratimatha* respectively.

*Swaratha* was another kind of composition which contained *Swaraksharas*. When the composition contained only *Swaraksharas* it was called *Sadha*; when a mixture of words and *Swaraksharas*, it was called *Misra*. Both of them survive in our present *Sargam*. *Kaivaras Prabandha* mainly consisted of *Jatis* and mnemonics from instrumental sound, and the form is prevalent even now as *Tribat*.

*Thagam* was a composition which resembled *Geetas* gene-

rally in structure. Its main feature was the presence of *Pata*. This belonged to the sphere of *Abhaysagana*, i.e. musical exercises, and helped veena students to develop the plectral technique. Many compositions of this class by Purandar Dasa and Venkatamukhi are available in the South.

*Besides the above, there were several other compositions including the following:*

- (1) *Varna*, which, in medieval times, meant composition in the *Varna Tala*.
- (2) *Pancha Taleswaram* was a composition which had five sections each of which was sung in different *Talas*.
- (3) *Srivilasa* too had five sections, each of which was in different *Raga* and *Tala*.
- (4) *Sriranga Prabandha* had four sections each of which was sung in different *Raga* and *Tala*.
- (5) *Umatilaka Prabandha* had three sections each of which was sung in different *Raga* and *Tala*.
- (6) *Pancha Bhairavi* and *Panchama* had two *Ragas* and two *Talas* incorporated in them.
- (7) *Sarbhaila* was sung in eight *Ragas* and *Talas*.
- (8) *Chachar* was sung during the Holi festival in spring. Now this has changed its form and exists as *Holi-chachar*, using fourteen measures instead of the ancient sixteen which is called *Chachar Tala* in the North.
- (9) In *Vichitra Prabandha*, the composition consisted of words from the different provincial languages. It had *Pata* and *Tenaka* and was set in many *Talas*.

So far we have dealt with the forms of music and compositions in which the words predominated, and were known as *Nibaddha Sangeet* as a whole. Now let us see what *Anibaddha Sangeet* meant in ancient music and its evolution.

The difference between *Nibaddha* and *Anibaddha* is that the former contains *Dhatus* or meaningful words composed in a musical form while the latter is devoid of them.

All the musical texts, from Bharata's *Natya Shastra* to *Sangeeta Ratnakara*, have spoken of the different arrangement of notes forming melodies in which the compositions were sung. But none of them have said anything of the music which is devoid of words and is sung only by vowelising the mere notes and is still capable of expressing any sentiment, mood or passion. In the chapter dealing with instrumental music, Sarangadeva has said that 'any instrument played solo, i.e., when it does not accompany voice or dance, is merely *Sushka Vadya*, (dry music)', implying that it is not capable of expressing any sentiment.

Later Abhinavagupta, the author of *Dhvanyaloka*, and the school that followed him strengthened the case of the music without words by maintaining that the mere arrangement of musical sounds in the shape of vowels is capable of expressing a sentiment.

He developed this idea perhaps from the doctrine of *Sphota*, prevalent even at an earlier period than Patanjali (200-300 B.C.), the great grammarian.

How do words, when uttered, come to convey a meaning? Abhinava replies by saying, 'By *Dhvani* (suggestion).' Then he proceeds to argue that it is well known that a word is made up of letters which are sounds by nature and individually possess no meaning at all. It is only when they function in aggregate that they convey meaning. Thus there can be an aggregate action in case of musical sounds when joined together. An object, according to him, is indicated by a word which is actually comprehended by the sound of its last letter, helped by the mental impression created by the sounds of the preceding letters. It is the sound of the last letter of the word that is the immediate agent for auditory perception and this is termed *Sphota*, literally meaning 'bursting forth'. It is so called because the object indicated by the word is supposed to come to consciousness suddenly in its unity and wholeness only from the corresponding sounds of the letters. If it is so, then the different sounds can be symbols of the things for which they are meant and therefore they have an inherent power of suggestion.



Taking their cue from this, the later musical writers developed the idea of *Anibaddha* music and found a place for it in the music lore of India.

We know that the sounds of the vowels elicited from the various musical instruments can be imitated by the voice without much difficulty. The later scholars of music must have developed the theory of *Alap* on this basis. Sarangadeva says that when the note-arrangement emitted by the instrument is masculine in character, it is *Alap*, and when feminine in approach it is *Alapan*. But he does not explain these differences clearly. He merely states: 'That which reveals the *Graha* (initial), *Amsa* (sonant), *Mandra* (lower octave), *Tara* (higher octave), *Nyasa* (the closing note), *Apanyasa* (medial stop), *Alpatva* (paucity), *Bahulatva* (abundance), *Shadvatva* (sexatonic), *Oudavatva* (pentatonic) characteristics is called *Alapa*.' He does not indicate the characteristics of *Alapti* and *Alapan* but Kallinatha, his commentator, has explained these three types more clearly. He has accepted the words *Alapa* and *Alapti* in their masculine and feminine senses, and has said that in the *Alapa* the *Graha*, *Amsa* etc. only reveal the bare form of the *Raga* which is called *Avirbhava* (manifestation). But in the *Alapti*, apart from the bare manifestation the *Raga* is given a concrete form. Where *Alapa* ends by manifesting the bare *Raga* the *Alapti* takes over and expresses it in all its fulness. *Alapan* holds a place midway between *Alapa* and *Alapti*.

Devoid of *Varna*, *Dhatu* and time-measure, no music is possible in the ordinary sense. So Sarangadeva proceeds to formulate rules for this type of music. He builds it on the *Vadi-Samavadi* basis. According to him, in *Alap* the *Raga* manifests on the *Vadi* note. The word *Sthayee* has been used for this purpose and is explained thus:

'The note on which the *Raga* reveals itself has been called *Sthayee* (established). According to Kallinatha, any of the seven notes can be *Sthayee*. The fourth note from the *Sthayee* in the ascending order is called *Dvyardha* (the second) and it may be the omitted note. The movement of a *Raga* with *Gamakas* or graces up to *Dvyardha* is known as

*Mukhachala*. This always takes place in the first *Svarasthan* and the movement of the *Raga* from the *Dvyardhasvara* to *Nyasa-svara* has been termed as the second *Svarasthan*. The eighth note from the *Sthayee* is *Dviguna* or *Ardhasthita*. Movement in the *Ardhasthita* with *Nyasa* is the third *Svarasthan* and movement in *Dviguna* is the fourth. *Svarasthanas* are the places of rest for *Ragalapan*.'

Kallinatha comments that in the first *Svarasthan*, not only the notes below the *Dvyardha* down to the *Sthayee* but also those below the latter are used, since the *Raga* is not manifested in a single note. By *Mukhachala* is meant the singing and playing of each *Raga* with its appropriate shakes, i.e. *Gamakas*. By this is indicated that the *Alapa* should begin in the *Sthayee* with the *Dvyardha* as the limit, using all the notes below it in a suitable manner and end on the *Sthayee* as a closing note. The second *Svarasthan* is the same as the first, except that it includes *Dvyardha* also in the *Mukhachala*. The third *Svarasthan* excludes the *Dviguna* and covers all the notes below it, closing on the *Sthayee*. In the fourth *Svarasthan* the *Dviguna* is meant to include the notes above it also. All of them have *Sthayeesvara* as the closing note. The *Sthayee* idea of old has changed into the *Ashayee* of modern North Indian music in which only the lower notes are used.

It is known from the old texts that there were two varieties of *Alapan* such as *Rupakalap* and *Akshiptika*. *Rupakalapti* was executed with *Tala* and *Raga*. *Rupak* again was of two kinds, viz., *Pratigrahanika* and *Bhanjani*. In the former, a part of the *Ragalapti* was rendered which was followed by a desired part of a *Prabandha* suited to a *Sthayee*. *Bhanjani* was of two kinds, viz., *Sthayee Bhanjani* and *Rupaka Bhanjani*. The first consisted of a varied treatment of the *Sthayee* of the *Rupaka* with proper rest (*Vishranti*) of the *Padas* or *Vidaris* as they were also called. When the *Sthayees* were replaced by other suitable *Gamakas* or alien *Dhatu* they were called *Rupak Bhanjani*.

*Akshiptika*, according to Sarangadeva, is made up of *Svaras* and *Padas* and sung to *Chanchuputa* and other *Talas*. Kallinatha says it is a kind of *Nibaddha Geeta*.

Sarangadeva ends the discussion on *Alapa* by saying that the establishment of the *Raga* (*Raga Sthapana*) is accomplished with the limited use of *Sthayees*, bright and varied, with a copious use of the *Angsasvara*. Kallinatha elaborates this idea further by saying that 'by the use of four *Svarasthanas* and a few *Raga Avayavas* (limbs or sections) in the elaboration of *Ragalapti*, the *Raga* is manifested immediately, but this manifestation reveals *Raga* only in a limited sense as the *Sthayees* are common to many *Ragas*. Thus the expression of the *Raga* is only partial.' He illustrates this by saying that 'when Devdutta comes forward into an assembly his whole personality is clearly revealed but when he sits in a crowd, his presence is concealed to some extent by the similarity of dress, language etc. of others. He then manifests himself only partially.' Another illustration: 'When a pearl assumes the colours of the different gems with which it is set, its manifestation is only partial.'

#### WORKS CONSULTED

- Bharata: *Natya Shastra*  
 Sarangadeva: *Sangeeta Ratnakara*  
 Matanga: *Brihaddeshi*  
 Avinavagupta: *Dhvanyaloka*  
 Ramachandran: *Ragas of Carnatic Music*

## 14. Current North Indian Musical Forms

### DHRUPAD

WE HAVE SEEN how music is closely allied to the tastes of the people and how often it changes its content and form. Beginning with the simple chanting of Vedic hymns, music in India has passed through different stages of development, taking different shapes and forms at different times, and arriving at last at the *Prabandha* form which persisted till the early decades of the Mohammedan rule.

Gradually some of these musical types mentioned in the previous chapter went out of fashion. But some of them persisted and gradually merged with one another, forming three distinct musical varieties, *Geeta*, *Dhrupapada* and *Chanda*, also called *Prabandha*, *Vastu* and *Rupak* respectively. The *Geetas* or *Prabandhas* used to have four sections and six limbs. They used to have six different themes: glory of the king, solfa notes, mnemonics of dance rhythms, mnemonics of the drum, composition signifying blessing, and love matters.

*Dhrupapada* or *Vastu* were compositions having up to four and sometimes five parts called *Udgraha*, etc. Later these came to be known as *Asthayee* or *Sthayee*, *Melpak* or *Melkaku*, *Antara*, *Bhog* and *Abhog*. There was a type of *Dhrupad* in which the *Melkaku* part was absent and it made use of five limbs.

In this the *Asthayee* part started on the Bass notes, *Antara* on the *D* of the middle octave, *Bhog* on *E* and *Abhog* on *F*. Nothing else is known about this type except that there were four kinds: *Phullabandh* and *Jugalbandh* were lyrical in composition; *Ragsagar* were compositions defining *Ragas* and

their peculiarities; and *Vishnupadas* contained prose compositions of the *Chanda* or *Rupaka* variety—they had two parts only.

And after the Muslim conquest all these varieties deteriorated due to lack of patronage and became unfamiliar. But *Dhrupad*, it would seem, persisted after getting involved with folk-music of the different regions thus giving birth to numerous types of regional *Dhrupad* styles.

Nothing is very clear about the nature of several of these intermediate forms but there has been a continuity from the very dawn of music to our time. "There are no gaps in the history of music, there are only ignorances. If the links of the chain appear to be broken, it is because historians have not discovered how to connect them."<sup>1</sup>

The last exponent of the *Geeta* music in the North was Jayadeva who flourished at the end of the fourteenth century. He has left compositions illustrating the *Raga* and *Tala* of each piece, but they are unintelligible to us today.

The indigenous school of Indian music suffered greatly during the period of anarchy and internecine strife which supervened the break-up of the Gupta hegemony in the middle of the seventh century. During the next five or six centuries the great tradition of the old music degenerated and lost its aesthetic appeal for its longer measures and Sanskrit words were no longer understood by the people at large.

All this is very natural to the arts and like all other arts music often becomes anaemic due to over-refinement, sophistication and knowledge that dulls the inspiration. So rebels very often strike back to new beginnings near the source where intuition outweighs training, where feeling is not usurped by tradition, where the imagination takes as much as may be needed to communicate emotion or to evoke aesthetic responses.

Many kinds of unauthorised and unrecognised musical forms came into existence and created disorder in the world of music. It was at this juncture that Man Toomar (1486-1525), Raja of Gwalior, with the help of his queen Mrignayani and court musician Bakshoo, placed before the music lovers

the *Dhrupad*, originally a traditional type but turned into a regional variety,<sup>2</sup> yet retaining some elements of its older tradition. These types prevailed in Bengal and other provinces under various names and styles, *Vishnupada*, *Dhruvapada* etc., which were generally sung by the beggar-minstrels. Raja Man Toomar and his companions were not the inventors of the *Dhrupad* form. What they did was to bring an older and cruder form of heterogeneous tradition into a homogeneous art form by weaving into the existing popular music the woof of traditional practices, usages and ideas which, far from rendering it foolishly grandiloquent, gave it a new vigour and status. Thus the *Dhrupad* was not only to retain the twists and turns of folk types that had gone into it, but was soon to acquire the polish, embellishment and serenity of the classical form undergoing many changes at the hands of many masters. And by the time of Akbar it outgrew its early form and boldly ventured into unexplored regions, acquiring a new status. It acquired a newness with the magic touch of Tansen for it had an inherent strength and capacity to absorb elements of alien origin without succumbing to them. The fusion of these erstwhile local, simple elements of folk style into the body of the 'rich', variegated classical art has imparted a rare beauty, elasticity and dignity to it.

As a composer of this type of music Tansen was peerless, and his composition, like Bach's music, has poetical quality which is very often epic in its sweep and sometimes tender and exquisitely lyrical. In his case the musical genius got the better of his poetic genius, while it is just the reverse in the case of one of his great contemporaries, Surdas, whose poetic fame has eclipsed his unique gifts as composer. Of Tansen, Abul Fazal, the famous historian at Emperor Akbar's court, has said: 'So sweet and rapturous was his melody that it induced intoxication in some and sobriety in the others.'

*Dhrupad*, meaning fixed, is suggestive of the fact that besides having themes of a fixed significance, it is guided by a fixed set of rules. Each of its four parts is unalterable in respect of words, notes, time, beats etc. Each stanza and the whole piece has to be sung in a fixed manner. The style is

very masculine and almost devoid of studied ornamental flourishes 'except a few graces and shakes, which too are very short'. No improvisation, no ornamentation, no fancy may be indulged in. Each note is to be struck individually and the composition is meant to be developed in all its correctness and purity.

*Dhrupad* is sung in slow time, and only very few from the innumerable time-measures are used. *Choutal*, *Dhima Trital*, *Jhaptal* and *Rupaka* are given preference.

Though earlier *Dhrupad* compositions contained four sections, *Asthayee*, *Antara*, *Sanchari* and *Abhog*, each a stanza of two or four lines, yet in the later part of its evolution, we find them reduced to two, viz. *Dhruva* or *Asthayee* and *Sanchari*. The reason for this shortening of the composition seems to be, first, the difficulty the artist found in remembering long passages and, secondly, the obstruction the use of a large number of words engendered in the development of the melody proper felt by the musicians.

*Dhrupads* are sung in four styles or *Vani*.

(1) The *Goudi Vani*, which was introduced by Tansen, is so called because he was a Goudiya Brahmin before his conversion to Islam. Its peculiarity is that in it are incorporated many of the old musical touches. It evokes *Santa Rasa* or serenity of the mind. Its gait is slow or elephantine.

(2) The *Khandar Vani* was introduced by Naubat Khan who hailed from Khandar in Rajputana. In this style the song is sung in pieces as on a veena. This is the most representative style; its speciality is its capacity to create variety and it is full of richness. It evokes the *Tivra Rasa*, or feeling of exhilaration, in the mind. In marked contrast to the *Goudi* style it is never sung in very slow rhythm, and it is forceful and full of movement. But it certainly does not involve the tonal acrobatics that are associated with it nowadays.

(3) The style brought into vogue by Srichand, a resident of the village Nowhar in the Delhi province, is known as *Nowhar Vani*. The chief qualities of this style are its simplicity and charm. Its gait is easy and agile and it has an

artless tonal charm. It creates a sense of wonder. It moves in jumps from the first to its third or fourth note.

(4) The style introduced by Brijchand of Dagur in Rajputana is known as *Dagur Vani*. Generally speaking, the *Goudi* style of singing *Dhrupad* is slow and heavy in its movement and requires great control of breath. In its execution, it is rigid and disciplined. It is marked by correct intonation, purity of design, simplicity of execution and massiveness of structure. Occasionally when it was sung at medium speed and there was a judicious blending with it of the *Khandar* style to add colour to the performance it was called *Dagur Vani*.

*Shuddha Vani*, or the pure style, is a feature of both the *Goudi* and *Khandar* styles. But the *Khandar* style can and does break away from this and seeks variety and ornamentation provided it does not violate *Yati*, i.e. the rhythm of the *Shuddha* variety. But the *Goudi* style never falters and never strays from the injunctions laid for the *Shuddha Vani*. Hence it is that the *Goudi Vani* is termed the prince; the *Khandar*, the minister; the *Nowhar*, the commander; and the *Dagur*, the servant.

While the notes of the *Goudi* style all stand by themselves and are independent of each other, in the *Dagur* style each note tends to merge with the other. That is why we find a sense of mystery underlying this style. The notes are often unrecognisable by the ear and the listeners often have to stretch their imagination to comprehend fully and enjoy the charm and depth of the compositions sung in this *Vani*.

Today the import of these *Vanis* are mostly lost.

However, the new creation *Dhrupad* soon surpassed all other existing musical forms in majesty and grandeur. It became the most favoured style of the court because it was in consonance with the spirit and dignity, valour and heroism which characterised the court of Akbar and his times. The people were moved by the grandeur of kings and their courts. They worshipped heroes and extolled loyalty, the capacity to suffer and to sacrifice. The court life followed a strict routine according to the prescribed rules of decorum and rigid dis-



cipline. The martial spirit was in the ascendant. The *Dhrupad* was the best vehicle to give expression to the spirit and life of the time. It was best suited to express eulogistic themes and noble sentiments.

### HORI-DHAMAR

Since around the subject-matter of this style of music are woven the glories of Krishna's pranks during the Holi festival and since it is sung in *Dhamar Tala* it has come to be known as *Hori-Dhamar*. In the beginning it was a type of the folk song of Brindavan and Mathura.

It came as a competitor to nascent *Kheyal* and in contrast to *Dhrupad* shed the austerity, adapting tonal sensuousness—expressing or rather describing emotion. But with passage of time it became senile and came to move in the rut of formalized pattern, thus becoming stereotyped by following a static canon of its own.

It uses a few more graces than *Dhrupad*; otherwise in structure and mode of presentation, except rhythm, it is similar to *Dhrupad*.

### KHEYAL

The *Kheyal* emerged in all probability as a reaction against the puritanical rigidity of *Dhrupad*. The style, which in the beginning followed the tradition of *Dhrupad*, was soon found to lean on the inspiration from the life of emotion; gradually its themes expanded in scope and scenes from secular life were introduced, which gave it some novelty. When it came into vogue it was in harmony with the ease-loving and luxurious spirit of the court. Though there was some opposition to it in the beginning, it gradually won the favour of the musicians and commoners so much that *Dhrupad* went out of fashion both inside and outside the courts.

*Kheyal* (imagination) is so called because it is by nature imaginative both as regards its subject-matter and its interpretation. Unlike *Dhrupad* it is not bound by rigid rules

except those pertaining to the use of notes in the *Raga*. It permits improvisation as much as possible as *Svaravistara* (development) within the song texts, in addition to the little *Alap* at the outset. It sanctions the use of decorative devices like graces, flourishes, trills, tremors, jerks etc. and above all *Tanas*. Thus the musician enjoys greater freedom in its execution and the listener is treated to a greater variety. The *Kheyal* is imaginative in conception, decorative in execution and romantic in appeal. Almost all themes can be rendered in it—devotional, heroic and romantic—though it is not as greatly suited for martial and heroic themes as *Dhrupad*. It is suitable for singing by both men and women. It is the dominant style today. It may be described as classicic-romantic.

The main distinction between *Dhrupad* and *Kheyal* is in the greater latitude given to the latter in the matter of improvisation which takes the form of *Vistara*. At first sight it looks as though there are no restrictions on the improvisation of the *Kheyal* singer but on close observation it will be found that it is not so. The best execution follows either of the two patterns that have come down from master to disciple through the centuries. The *Kheyal's* development may proceed either along the purely melodic structure, in which case it sounds like *Alap*, or straightway with the words, in which case the verbal texture is broken up into bits and each bit woven into the musical phrase. Each movement of the phrases may implicitly follow the divisions of the initial rhythm or it may temporarily go its own way until it reaches the *Sam*, i.e. the climax of the rhythm, the point where the gathering momentum of the song exhausts itself for the time being but only to begin anew.

The origin of the *Kheyal* can be traced to *Qawali* singing (a kind of devotional music based on Hindu *Bhajans*) by the Muslims. This was the work of Amir Khusru in the twelfth century. It was, however, left to Sultan Hussain Shirqui of Jaunpur to nurture and develop it on the basis of an older form called *Pachda*, a type of woman's song prevalent in North India in medieval times. Thus *Pachda*, which was

essentially of the folk type, attained a refined literary form in the *Lavani* from which were derived the *Kheyal* compositions. The disciples of Amir Khusru who specialised in *Qawali* singing later came to be classified as *Qawals* and *Kalawants*. The former mainly devoted themselves to Muslim devotional songs, while the latter took to singing mundane songs in the *Qawali* style. Till the appearance of Tansen, *Qawals*, *Kalawants* and *Dhrupad* singers enjoyed an equal status among the people and at the court. But when *Dhrupad* monopolised the patronage of the courts the status of the *Qawals* and *Kalawants* suffered. But gradually the *Kheyal* began to develop and the genius of Sadarang gave it a distinct form, content, richness and beauty to help it stand up as a rival to *Dhrupad*. But the *Kheyal* created by Sadarang was quite different from what it is today. It was almost similar to *Dhrupad*, the only difference being that besides the use of a few decorative motifs the *Alap*, or overture, instead of preceding the songs as in *Dhrupad* was integrated in or rather punched with the text of the song. They were always sung in a slow time-measure which was the very life of *Dhrupad* singing.

The result of the synthesis of decorative principle and word structure of the *Raga* is *Kheyal*, a new form. And here lies its speciality. The two facets of the *Raga* which were shown separately in *Dhrupad* began now to be expressed within a single form which has made it possible for *Kheyal* to elbow out *Dhrupad*. But in its attempt to have this synthesis, *Kheyal* has not been able to adopt every element that went in the making of *Dhrupad* and, therefore, had to discard some. In *Dhrupad* the words of the song blended perfectly with the tune and the singers of old took great pains and care to maintain this balance. Though it was attempted in early *Kheyls*, too, later musicians could not maintain it for long. The words have become a mere pretext in the modern *Kheyal*. And therefore we find the *Kheyal* compositions being shortened from time to time. The improvisation of the wordless melody has absorbed the mind of the present *Kheyal* singer so much that he is least interested in the words of the

song and cares very little for the composition, however short it may be. Moreover, it has not been possible for the *Kheyal* to absorb and adapt the variety of the development found in the old style of *Alap*. Those who have heard *Alap* from the late Nasiruddin and bigger *Kheyals* from the late Alladia Khan will realise the difference.

During a later period, while being driven out into oblivion under the dominating pressure of *Kheyal*, *Dhrupad* also adopted decorative motifs and even absorbed *Tanas* but it was all like an old lady decorating herself in vain to compete with younger girls.

No doubt *Kheyal* has introduced a novelty or rather a new charm in music but music has lost the richness in development as was found in the *Alap* and the introvertive depth of *Dhrupad*.

In the early *Kheyals*, the influence of *Dhrupads* dominated and therefore a manly sonority and depth were found in them. There were few decorations compared to the work of the present day and they excelled in *Bol-Tanas* and variety of rhythms which were in tune with the *Dhrupad* style. But the present-day *Kheyals* are more influenced by the *Thumri* style and hence are overburdened with decorations. Womanly sweetness is the ideal with small *Tanas*.

It is said that one Bade Mohammed Khan, a musician of the court of Gwalior, introduced the use of *Tanas* in *Kheyal* singing which previously belonged to the *Qawali* style. He was a singer of the *Qawali* style and had many disciples and followers. But none of them corrupted the style introduced by Sadarang; on the contrary, they enriched it to the best of their ability by gracing it with *Tana*. Later Haddu, Hassu and Nathan Khan, three brothers who were disciples of Bade Mohammed Khan, evolved a new style of *Kheyal* singing faster in movement, in which the *Kalawant* and *Qawali* styles found an exquisite blending. It is strange that *Kheyal* found a new soul in the same court where long ago *Dhrupad* was developed and nurtured. This time slow-timed *Kheyal* began to be followed by medium- and fast-timed *Kheyal* with their luxurious decorations and *Tanas*.

The primary thing in the fast *Kheyals* with *Tanas* and other decorations is the multiplicity, not the unity, which distinguishes the *Vilambit* from the slow *Kheyals*. Like the latter the design is not conceived as an integrated whole, having its significance in the composition itself, but with an eye to the function of individual parts which lead a marked life of their own.

Like many latter-day *Dhrupads* the *Kheyal* consists of two sections, *Asthayee* and *Antara*. All kinds of embellishments and graces are used. The *Kheyal* uses a compass of three octaves, giving scope for extreme elaboration. *Tanas* of various kinds are profusely used. The larger compositions are sung in slow time, viz. *Dhima*, *Ektal*, *Jhoomra*, and the shorter ones in faster *Talas* such as *Trital*, *Jhaptal* etc. The slow type is plaintive. It is similar to the *Kriti* of South Indian music. The *Dhrupad* and *Kheyal* singers are generally different; for, in the opinion of the former, *Kheyal* is unclassical. The *Kheyal* singers claim to be the followers of Amir Khusru.

There are four types of *Kheyal* singing prevalent in the country today. One is the Kirana school which was best represented by the late Abdul Karim Khan and Waheed Khan of Lahore. The Punjab School is represented by Ustad Ghulam Ali and the Gwalior School by Shankar Pandit. A new school was innovated by the late Ustad Alladia Khan and is represented by Kesarbai. The difference in the styles of the late Alladia Khan and the late Abdul Karim Khan is that the former is solid and severe. Note meets note with austere grace in which there is no superfluous decoration. It is as if the Indian emphasis on harmony and form blended with the Muslim emphasis on splendour and decoration. In the latter, solidity has given place to grace and freedom and expansive movement.

The Gwalior style, on the contrary, renders the *Asthayee* and the *Antara* parts correctly and neatly as no other school does. The peculiarity of the style is the prominence of sharp edges and the general absence of smooth curves. In this school *Tanas* reach three octaves. The best exponents of this

school are Krishna Pandit and Mushtaq Hussain.

There is also the Agra school which has incorporated much of the *Dhrupad* and *Hori-Dhamar* techniques and can be called the *Kheyal* of *Dhrupad* style known in India as *Dhrupad ang Kheyal*. The exponent of this school was the late Fayaz Khan. A speciality of the style is its 'wonderful organisation of aural content'.

Here we are confronted with the question of what constitutes style. Though it is very difficult to answer this point, it may be stated that it is the individual flavour which makes one school of art different from another.

'Imagine the artist as a sort of chef; a man whose purpose is to achieve an amalgam of three interdependent yet conflicting ingredients, that is, symbolism, representation and form . . . who adds to this amalgam a fourth ingredient, his medium, and then stirs all four together into a kind of dough, which he bakes in the oven of his craftsmanship. The result is a dish in which all the ingredients play their part but which is not a mechanical mixture (as the chemists say) but a chemical compound. Once the stuff is baked, you cannot separate it again into its component ingredients. Nor, of course, is it necessary to do so in order to enjoy it. And yet, even though the proof of any particular pudding may be in the eating, if we are to trace the history of puddings down the ages we must have some knowledge of what ingredients were used and how they were mixed—how chef A despised eggs so that all who followed him produced eggless puddings, until the great artist, chef B, reinstated the egg, and an "eggy" period followed, modified later by C, whose passion for currant and raisin altered for the time being the attitude of mind of half a continent towards the making of puddings; how the chefs of the East based their puddings on rice and invariably served them cold, while those of the West made them of flour and liked them piping hot. What is important for us is to enjoy the pudding, not to analyse it, but at least one approach to enjoyment lies through analysis provided it is the kind of analysis that always keeps the end in mind and is content not to think only of the means. It must be an analysis of flour,

the means of communicating pleasure, not of cooking, the method of practising a craft.

'Every work of art has its own style. And an artist's style is not a thing he deliberately adopts, though it is the thing he can exploit or develop. Like a man's handwriting the tone of his voice is an inevitable part of himself. It is his personality made manifest. Tell a dozen artists "to sing the notes of a *Raga*" and you will get a dozen different results . . . different flavour of tones. Some will singly boldly, others hesitatingly; some of the tones will be hard and steely, others delicate and sensitive; some will remind you of a thread of silk laid on the paper, others, a piece of black velvet. Each of these twelve interpretations will be an index of a different kind of man and from the quality of the tone . . . its style, you can deduce the man.

'If a mere singing of the tones gives so much evidence about its creators, how much more complete will be the evidence of a complex work like singing the whole melody! At every turn the artist will give himself away. He will reveal his attitude to the audience; his feeling about the moods, his keenness of observation, the retentiveness of his aural memory, his sense of design, his capacity to control his voice, tones and undertones. Style is the accumulated result of all this evidence. Without these, it will be mere skilful interpretation of the craft.'

### THUMRI

As this type of composition was sung at the beginning in the *Thumri* time-measure it came to be called after it. The words come from *Thumuk*, which means a graceful stamp of the foot. This indicates its connection with dance. The end of the 18th century 'witnessed an abortive renaissance, elegant and fashionable but extremely mannered' and this is reflected in *Thumri* to the fullest extent. It is obvious that all the developments in art and life in this period must be treated as nearly different expressions of the same phenomenon—the reawakening of the Indian creative urge which started with

Akbar and ended its cycle with the decline and fall of the Moghul Empire.

It is a lilting music, amorous in its subject-matter. Though the aims of both *Kheyal* and *Thumri* are to please the listener, yet there is a marked difference between their respective techniques. *Kheyal* generally deals with more than one *Rasa* whereas *Thumri* limits itself to the *Sringara*, or the erotic feeling. They seem quite alike when dealing with *Sringara Rasa* alone, but when *Kheyal* expands into the regions of other feelings, the difference becomes apparent. According to Sarangadeva, the erotic feeling uses *Priti*, *Marjani*, *Kshiti*, *Rakta*, *Sandipani*, and *Alapini Shrutis* more than others, and we find them in abundance in *Thumri*. The above *Shrutis* fall within the compass of *Ma* and *Pa*. *Thumri* is usually sung in the light *Ragas* in which these notes are either dominant or sub-dominant.

*Kheyal* generates *Rasas* which are the outcome of *Sthaibhava* (dominant emotion) whereas *Thumri* creates only touches of *Rasas* with the help of *Sancharibhavas* (secondary emotions). The *Kheyal* singer, like a prose-writer, brings into play all types of sentiment in singing a *Raga* and therefore has to follow certain fixed rules and conventions. But the *Thumri* singer, on the contrary, mixes curious *Rasas* with a view to limiting his improvisation within the ambit of *Sringara* and *Karuna Rasa*. *Kheyal* may be compared to the Ajanta frescos done on a wide canvas and *Thumri* to Moghul miniatures with all their rich artistic details.

The *Thumri* has some special characteristics. It often consists of a poem, the subject-matter of which is love, dealing especially with a particular temper or mood. It resorts to *Bol*-making; this is the life of *Thumri* singing. *Bol*-making is 'the art of conveying musically as many shades of meaning as the words can bear'. There are no fixed rules or definite instructions laid down regarding *Bol*-making and it depends entirely on the artiste's temperament and the range of his imagination.

It is the expression of the mood which is the soul of the performance. It is purely romantic and needs a feeling heart,



an imaginative mind and a mellow voice to bring out all its beauty.

It is difficult to state definitely who was the originator of *Thumri*. The story goes that it was prevalent among the common people and one Sadik Ali Khan, a musician in the court of Oudh, improved upon it. This is known as the Lucknow style and it attained its full beauty at the hands of the late Maijuddin. There is another known as the Banaras style nurtured in that holy city.

The Lucknow style is chaste, artistic and rich in fine details. The language of all its compositions is very similar and conventional, whether they are composed by Lalan Pia or Sanad Pia or Qadir Pia. The Banaras style, on the contrary, has been influenced considerably by *Kajri*, *Chaiti* and other types of folk music of the neighbourhood. The significance of the words of the *Thumri* composition is expressed through the gestures of the whole face, known as *Bhao* (corruption of *Bhava*, meaning state of mind). Another recent type of *Thumri* style which is becoming popular is what is known as the Punjabi style. *Bol-making* is conspicuously absent in it, and it uses the *Tappa* type of *Tanas*. *Pahari*, *Mahiya* and other types of folk music of the Punjab have influenced this style to a considerable extent.

A characteristic feature of *Thumri* is *Bol-tan*, i.e. musical phrase interlinked with words, and its characteristic *Tala* goes by the name of *Gadhe Ki Dum* (donkey's tail). As contrasted with the '*Tanas* of *Kheyal* which run and rush like a cataract' the *Tanas* of *Thumri* are 'the spray of a fountain quivering in the silvery moonlight'.

## DADRA

This type of music is very much akin to *Thumri*. In structure and in spirit they are almost identical. In theme, treatment and exposition also they resemble each other. The only difference lies in the *Tal* used and the absence of *Bol-making*. The *Dadra* type uses *Dadra Tal*, and hence its name. It is sometimes stated that *Thumri* music must have evolved from

*Dadra*, as *Dadra Tal* is much older than the *Thumri Tal*. But both are in origin simple bits of folk songs woven with a traditional touch into a garland of exotic fragrance.

## TAPPA

The word *Tappa* comes from the root-word *Tap* (short). It is derived from the tune of the camel-drivers of the Punjab. The subject-matter is woven around the amorous life of the mythical Hir and Ranja, the Romeo and Juliet of the Punjab. Its texts are almost all in the Punjabi language. It was perfected by Shori Miyan (c. 1810), a musician in the court of Nawab Asafuddaula of Oudh, and was developed a great deal in Bengal. All the *Ragas* of Indian music, except the heavy ones, are used in *Tappa* and it exhibits all the graces. Its limited ornate pattern, with short palpitating figures and characteristic texts, immediately discriminates it from any other style. The trill is its speciality. Its rhythm is very marked and it is generally sung in a medium tempo. In composition it has two sections like *Kheyal*. The *Tappa* is fast disappearing from the field. It is seldom heard these days. However, its *Tanas* have been incorporated in both *Kheyal* and *Thumri* and they have enriched these two types.

The beauty of singing *Tappa* lies in the quick display of various permutations and combinations of notes. 'The *Tans* used in *Thumri* should be made to appear like a garland of small crystals, crisp and brittle, and those of *Tappa* a flow of mercury globules.'

The types of musical compositions discussed above are not wholly new. They remind one of the five forms of compositions current in Sarangadeva's time (13th century): *Shuddha*, *Bhinna*, *Goudi*, *Vesara* and *Sadharani*; *Shuddha* meaning pure or plain, *Bhinna* indicating difference from *Shuddha* and having clear-cut notes, *Goudi* meaning sweet, *Vesara* meaning fast and *Sadharani* meaning ordinary but indicating the possession of features of all the above. According to the description given by Sarangadeva, we can classify *Dhrupad* and *Dhamar* with *Shuddha* and *Bhinna*, *Thumri* with *Goudi*,

*Tappa* with *Vesara* and *Kheyal* with *Sadharani*.

### SADRA

This is a composition sung in fast *Jhaptala*.

### SARGAM

These are solfa passages sung in *Raga*. This solfaization is very common in India and is considered a thing to be cultivated. It is also used with other songs.

### TARANA

This is a kind of musical composition in which, instead of words, the *Alapa* syllables *Nom*, *Tom* etc. are employed for their tonal value. It follows a strict time-measure requiring great ability and skill in the performer to create an appeal as it is devoid of poetry. To the student of music it gives an accurate and subtle sense of rhythm and makes him perfect in *Tana*-singing.

### TIRVAT

This is to sing the melody with the mnemonics of *Tabla* instead of words. This type of composition is not a new one but an extension and improvement of the old type of song in which no words were used but only rhythmic sound-syllables like *Jhumtum*, *Dhen*, *Dhi*, *Dhan*, *Ti*, *Kite*, etc. now sometimes called *Jati*, *Sol* or *Bol*—i.e., sounds emitted by the string and drum instruments which have been named by *Bharata* as *Nirgita Sangeeta* or music without songs.

### CHATURANGA

It is a song consisting of one part each of *Kheyal*, *Tarana*, *Sargam* and *Tirvat*, i.e. mnemonics used in time-measure.

## RAGAMALA

This consists in singing each line or a part of a musical piece in different *Ragas*, all held together in one composition. The whole must be a string of melodies with a thread of unity running through it. Sometimes lines are sung in different time-measures known as *Talamala*.

The heavy classical styles like *Dhrupad*, *Hori-Dhamar* and *Sadra* are advantageously rendered by the bass and baritone; *Kheyals*, *Sargams* and *Chaturanga* by baritone and tenor; and *Thumri*, *Dadra* by tenor and soprano.

## R E F E R E N C E S

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2. Abul Fazal: *Ain-e-Akbari*
3. Abul Fazal: *Ain-e-Akbari*
4. D. P. Mukherjee: *Indian Music—An Introduction*

## 15. The Analysis of the Composition

ALL THE COMPOSITIONS of Hindustani music are in Braja Bhasha, a dialect spoken in and around Mathura and Brindavan. The reason for this is that vowel sounds are more suitable for music than consonants and, among all the languages of North India, this dialect has probably the largest number of words without any conjunct consonants and the vowel is very prominent at the end of every letter. In music it is not enough to use ordinary words but the softer consonants and the sibilant must prevail before the melody takes shape in the human voice.

Excluding the compositions used in *Dhrupad* which are generally high-class poetical pieces, the *Kheyal* and *Thumri* compositions are in most cases in prose tinged with the colour of poetry; they are indeed prose-poems. The length of the syllables and sound are determined by the requirements of music and compositions do not always conform to any set rules regulating their length, metre and rhyme. The musical composers are more interested in the music and the musical rhythm. In poetry the words are used always for the sense but in musical compositions they are primarily used as a vehicle for musical sound and secondarily for sense.

Therefore 'the more essentially the singer is a musician, however, the more the words are regarded merely as the vehicle of music: in art-song the words are always brief, voicing a mood rather than telling any story, and they are used to support the music with little regard to their own logic'—precisely as the representative element in a modern

painting merely serves as the basis for an organisation of pure form of colour. The words in music merely serve for organising the form with tonal shades.

One peculiar thing about the medieval poetry of India is that it is the woman who does the courting. She is the active agent in the love-play; the mistress who seeks and wins over the man by cajoling, entreating and tantalizing. For the expression of love and desire, hope and despair, fondness, passion, jealousy and anger it is the woman who is the medium. This might well be due to the fact that in a polygamous society a man could marry many wives and a woman naturally had to be more solicitous and demonstrative to attract and secure and hold his affection.

If we analyse the existing compositions we find their subject-matter quite simple and almost commonplace. The musical ditties, viz. the *Kheyal* and *Thumri*, are generally composed around the following themes:

- (1) Beseeching the lover to be gracious.
- (2) Lamenting the absence of the beloved.
- (3) Imprecating the rivals.
- (4) Complaining of inability to meet the lover due to the watchfulness of the mother-in-law and sister-in-law and the tinkling of the little ornamental bells round the waist and ankles, called *Bichhua* and *Payalia*.
- (5) Fretting and making use of invectives against the mother-in-law and sister-in-law as being the obstacles in the way of her love.
- (6) Exclaiming to female companions or friends (*Sakhis*) and supplicating for their assistance for the fulfilment of love.
- (7) *Sakhis* reminding their friend about the tryst and exhorting her to meet the beloved.'
- (8) Description of rainy and spring seasons.

In Indian love poetry the rainy season is the time when the lovers most ardently long to be united and this love poetry often paints the sorrow, 'even unto death, of her whose beloved does

not return before the rainy season'.

And spring is the season of wild merriment and carefree love-making as, with the harvest over, the people are free to worship Kama, the god of love.

- (9) Pranks of Krishna during Holi and other times.
- (10) Welcoming the cawing of a crow which portends the coming of the beloved or requesting the crow to carry a message to the beloved who is far away. In medieval Indian literature the crow has been the ally of the love-sick maidens living far away from their lovers. The crow fulfils not only the role of a sympathiser but also of a messenger and confidant.

Thus the dominant subject-matter of much of Indian music composed after Muslim invasion is love in all its aspects—though allegorised as Divine Love—and the words are always sincere and passionate.

It was the achievement of the Vaishnava singers who produced a vast mass of musical compositions wherein the lyrical and romantic elements in both poetry and music found their highest and purest expression. They achieved a unity of word, thought and emotion with perfect felicity. The Vaishnava movement arose as a protest, if not as a revolt, against the cold intellectualism of Brahminic philosophy leading the people to lean towards asceticism, its lifeless formalism and ritualism. Man as a gregarious animal found that a human symbol 'transforms God from metaphysical abstraction to a physical presence' and human pattern makes it easy for him to live with reality as he lives and communes with his fellow beings. This belief was intended to make religion more humanistic and therefore more accessible to the people; to achieve this he brought into religion a personal God (Being) and an emotional personal relationship between the Being and man (Becoming) which from now onwards began to revolve round human love with its accompanying joys, sorrows, sacrifices, frailties and nobilities. Love and service of God and man became synonymous. This approach to life and religion

brought into music many idioms and feelings of the people which made Indian music reflect 'an emotion and an experience which are deeper and wider and older than the emotions or wisdom of a single individual. Its joy is without exultation, it is passionate without any loss of sincerity, and it is in the deepest sense of the word all human'.<sup>2</sup>

The novelty of Indian songs lies in both the theme and conventional treatment of them. This is palpitating love, expressed with a wealth of fantastic imagery and literary refinement in the simple and passionate songs of the people.

It is a sentimental doctrine, a romantic cult, a pathological condition which can be artificially stimulated, which finds its ideal not in the *amorosa* but in the *amoroso* from whose worship and service is derived an ethical force by which the composer's life is enriched and ennobled.

These musical compositions are part and parcel of that vast literature which goes by the name of Bhakti or Vaishnava literature. Vaishnavism is based on the analogy of woman's intense love for man. In his eternal quest to find and establish his relationship with the Universal Soul the devotee (*Bhakta*) has taken a lesson from life itself. He found that in this world no desire is as strong as the craving for a mate. Investigating further in this direction, he found that woman, the anabolic agent, is the real seeker, as man's need for a woman is temporary and partial whereas a woman's is a life-long search for fulfilment of her destiny. Of all bonds, the man-woman relation is the sweetest. Going a little further in his thought, he discovered that the ordinary love of husband and wife was not intense enough, so he took up as his ideal illegitimate love—where emotion finds its strongest expression and whose warmth is more intense. The *Bhakta* thus sought to establish with his God such a friendship based on man-woman relationship, with himself as the woman in search of her man.

There is nothing ludicrous or unnatural in man displaying this feminine attitude as modern biology has proved that each individual has genes of the opposite sex. In other words 'every man carries his Eve in himself'. 'The assumption of the passive feminine attitude solves an inner conflict as well



as social predicament inasmuch as the sex-urge which disturbs the cause of emotional life is subdued. In the matter of religion the male desire is projected to God while the feminine attitude, normally suppressed in life, also finds its fulfilment. Such capacity to accept the opposite sex-attitude seems essential, according to the modern school of psychology, for resolving many of the disharmonies in sexual behaviour.<sup>33</sup>

In India the erotic sentiment has always formed 'the background for the illumination to all its poetic, dramatic, and rhetorical literature, and it is under its mild, soft and inspiring light that the most exquisite productions of Hindu literature have blossomed into their splendour.'<sup>34</sup>

Thus there has been an intimate connection between erotics and music.

This was natural in an age when many laxities in sexual conduct entered into society engendering many frustrations which found relief in this new way of worshipping God by making God the beloved. This idea supplied the necessary motif which later resurrected that fine symbol of Radha-Krishna, Radha representing the human soul (in the process of Becoming) through which man seeks harmony and integration between himself and the Being (Krishna).

If these songs of love have become a part and parcel of the musical heritage of India it is because the people found nothing unholy or impure in sex. Though *Dharma* was accepted as the supreme social conduct leading to *Moksha* (salvation) yet *Artha* and *Kama*, i.e. the endeavour for wealth and the enjoyment of love, were by no means considered unimportant. Sex was recognised as one of the basic factors of life and was integrated into the religion. 'Sexual feeling is really the root of all ethics and no doubt of aestheticism and religion.' This is also the belief of Western psychologists. And for this belief, of all the *Rasas* or emotions accepted by the litterateurs, *Sringara Rasa* (erotic emotion) is acclaimed as the root and the highest. The Indian theory of aesthetics also holds that in ecstasies of love and art men receive an intimation of that redemption known as *Moksha*.

These songs which are composed around the love motif of

Radha and Krishna are not only the songs of the common man but the mystic songs of a nation woven round the activities of daily life and allegorised. They are the expression of the spiritual in sensuous and lyric terms. The music here thus involves a profound study of the passions, conflicts and emotions of the human heart in general. Its main theme is earthly love, which in its highest ethical aspect transcends the enjoyment of flesh and links the soul of man with God.

Soon this cult spread among the people. Among the court poets, on the one hand, it gave rise to the sentimental lyric in which sensuous music combined with literary artifice replaced the warmth of genuine emotion. Among the people it was pressed into the service of a new art, the romance of the love-crazy woman whose life is consumed in devotion to an unattainable and idealised beau. The mystics on their side seized upon the element of idealism in these portrayals of an exalted and spiritual love to serve as an allegory of the soul's unceasing devotion to the beloved.

The *Kheyal* compositions, based on the above motifs, were created in the latter half of the eighteenth century. It was a period of political upheavals which rendered the normal life of the general people in the country unsafe and conjugal life insecure. Moreover, the foreign culture of the Muslims, in spite of many good points, also induced some failings. Luxury, sloth and self-indulgence permeated the life of the court and people round it. Music created in such an atmosphere and for the gratification of the chiefs and nobles of such courts could not but voice their sentiments. The luxury of the lives of these men who were the patrons of music and the other arts was of the earth. The notables pined for women who would rather die than enter their harems while the inmates of their harems would complain of their lovers' neglect and the abducted women, forced to concubinage, dreamt of a peaceful love life with men of their choice in the other world. These unsatisfied longings would often find an outlet in illicit love-making or feigning it in songs of love.

The aim of the composer in India was to capture the momentary but intense moods and experiences of these denizens of

the courts, and imprison them in vivid music. Hence we find the composers dwelling on the same subject, harping on the same themes and setting them to the same tunes. The form and structure of these compositions are more or less fixed, and so are the rhythmic scheme and time-measure. The metaphors and images are likewise the same. They did not go in search of new themes or motifs or metaphors. But with all their repetitions neither the subjects nor their imageries have become stale. This is due to the fact that no two experiences even of the same thing are ever alike. The joys and sorrows of the human heart seem to be ever new like the leaves of a bamboo tree, endlessly different as they catch the sunlight at infinite angles during the many moments of the day.

The tune or melody predominates in the *Kheyal* often drowning the words of the compositions but as is the case in Western music 'the words of the majority of songs are so poor and even silly that the loss is not necessarily severe'. The theme is sung once or twice just to capture and hold the attention of the listener and create the necessary mood as words also possess the power to create the feeling. The words used in music therefore must conform to the spirit of the *Ragas* very clearly delineated in the *Raga Dhyanas* or meditations which should be subjected to the crucial test of rhetorical interpretation.

The subject-matter of *Dhrupad* compositions are:

- (1) Praise of gods and goddesses.
- (2) Prayers and entreaty.
- (3) Eulogy of kings and princes and patrons.
- (4) Descriptions of seasons.
- (5) Occasional descriptions of the nude body of a woman of perfect beauty and grace comparing each of her limbs with the wealth of nature transcending all sexuality.

Compared to *Kheyal* and *Thumri* compositions the poetry of *Dhrupad* compositions is excellent and superb. Compositions of *Thumri* and *Dadra* are lighter, tending towards fri-

volity and even vulgarity as they mostly describe the temper of the passions and desires of women in love, in which the physical side is a little over-stressed.

## R E F E R E N C E S

1. Capt. Willard: *A Treatise on the Music of Hindustan*
2. Ananda Coomaraswamy: *The Dance of Shiva*
3. Radhakamal Mukerjee: *The Art and Science of Mysticism*
4. Lala Kanoomal: *Kamakala*

## O T H E R   W O R K S   C O N S U L T E D

Sushil K. De: *Bengal Vaishnavism*  
Bhandarkar: *Vaishnavism and Saivism*  
A. Elster: *Musik und Erotic*

## 16. Embellishments

EMBELLISHMENTS AND GRACES are found in the music of all countries in one form or other. They are more frequent and varied in the melodic form of music to which they are essential and not incidental. The theorists of Indian music, therefore, always attached great importance to them and have gone so far as to declare that 'music without embellishments is like a night without the moon, a river without water, a creeper without flower and a flower without fragrance'.

The melody is a bare live skeleton. And when it is played or sung with varied ornamentations it puts on flesh and blood. To enrich them graces are used in the West also but they are not so elaborate as in India. 'It is natural that in Europe, where many notes are heard simultaneously, grace should appear as an unnecessary elaboration added to the note rather than as a structural factor. But in India the note and the microtonal grace compose a closer unity as they fulfil just the functions of adding light and shade which in harmonised music is attained by varying the degrees of assonants. Indian songs without grace would seem to an Indian ear "as bald as the European art-song without the accompaniment which it pre-supposes."'

In Indian music the embellishments are known as *Alan-karas* (ornaments). The term is quite appropriate as they adorn the body of music. They have been defined as 'a combination of several melodic movements'. Like *Varnas*, from which they are derived, they have been classified into four different groups:

- (1) The *Sthayee* (level) *Alankara*, or the simple vocalisation, which returns either to the note from where it starts or to the tonic;
- (2) The *Arohi Alankara*, or the ascending embellishment which moves up from one note to a higher one.
- (3) The *Avrohi*, or the descending embellishment, which comes down from one note to a lower one; and
- (4) The *Sanchari*, or the moving embellishment, which is an elaborate vocalisation combining in itself all the above three *Alankaras*.

The *Sthayee Alankaras* are seven in number:

- (a) *Prasanna-adi* (those that begin on a low note).
- (b) *Prasanna-anta* (those that end on a low note).
- (c) *Prasanna-adi-anta* (those that begin and end on a low note).
- (d) *Prasanna-madhya* (those that have a low note in the middle).

Here we should note that the word *Prasanna* (pleasing) is used in music as a technical term and is synonymous with *Mandra*, or low.

- (e) *Krama Rechita* (that which proceeds at an orderly gallop).
- (f) *Prastara* (that which expands).
- (g) *Prasadana* (that which decorates *Prasanna Adi* starts from below and ascends to the upper octave).

*Prasanna-adi* starts from below and ascends to the upper octave:

*SRS/RGR/GMG/MPM/PDP/DND/NSN/SRS*

*Prasanna-anta* descends from a higher note to the lower note:

*SSRRSS/RRGGRR/GGMMGG/MMPPMM/PPDDPP/  
DDNNDD/NNSSNN/SSRRSS*

*Prasanna adi-anta* is low at the commencement and at the end with a high note in the middle:

*SGRS/RMGR/GPMG/MDPM/PNDP/DSND/NRSN/SGRS*

*Prasanna-madhya* is low in the middle and high at the beginning and at end:

*SSGRRSS/RRMMGGRR/GGPPMMGG/MMDDPPMM/  
PPNDDPP/DDSSNDD/NRRSSN/SSGRRSS*

*Krama Rechita* has a steady galloping pace:

*SGRGMGRS/RMGMPMGR/GMPDPMG/MDPDNDPM/  
PNDNSNDP/DSNRSND/NRSRGRSN/SGRGMGRS*

*Prastara* has an expanding movement:

*SGRMMGRS/RMGPPMGR/MDPNNDPM/PNDSSNDP/  
PSNRRSND/NRSGGRSN/SGRMMGRS*

*Prasadana* gives deft touches of beauty:

*SSRRGGMGRGRS/RRGGMMPMGMGR/  
GGMMPPDPMPMG/MMPPDDNDPDMP/  
PPDDNNSNDNDP/NNSSRRGRSRSN/SSRRGGMGRGRS*

*Sanchari Alankara* are many but only seven are generally used by the musicians. They are:

- (1) *Tara-Mandra-Prasanna* (high-low-low), like *Prasanna-adi*.
- (2) *Mandra-Tara-Prasanna* (low-high-low), similar to *Prasanna-anta*.
- (3) *Avartaka* (whirlpool): *SSRRSSRS, RRGRRGR, GGMMGGMG* etc.
- (4) *Sampradana* (gift): *SSRRSS, RRGRR, GGMMGG* etc.

- (5) *Vidhuta* (wavy): *SGSG, RMRM, GPGP, MDMD* etc.
- (6) *Upalolaka* (rolling): *SRSRGRGR, RGRGMGMG, GMGMPPMPM* etc.
- (7) *Ullasita* (overjoyed): *SSGSG, RRMRM, GGPGM, MMDMD* etc.

A melody is also adorned by the use of *Gamakas*. A general term for a thing becomes an elaborate vehicle of light and shade. 'It brings out the notes of a melody as surely as the light and shade of a picture bring the contours of face from flat into round.' A *Gamak* has been defined as an ornament of the notes 'which produces the colour of *Shrutis* other than its own.' It is a graceful guttural jerk on a note or notes when, in singing, a note rises from its own pitch and moves towards another so that (something of the expression of) the second sound passes like a shadow over it. It is also a way of sliding from a note to another or others at a stretch.

All the innumerable ways in which the notes can be ornamented or resolved have come to be known as *Gamakas*. The grace 'is a rule rather than exception, because the passage from one note to the other is always made indirectly and the use of grace makes it one musical utterance'.

Though their numbers have varied according to different texts at different times, yet seventeen *Gamakas* have been common to all writers and generally been accepted by them.

(1) *Tirupa* (flurry): 'This is also known as *Hillola*. It is a lovely quivering one like a slight stroke on the drum lasting only one-eighth of a *Matra*.' 'When the intervals move quickly round like a whirl, the connoisseur of music recognises it as *Tirupa*.'

(2) *Sphurita* (throb): 'This is also known as *Gitkiri*. The speed of *Sphurita* is exactly one-sixth of a *Matra*.' 'When intervals of a throb move upwards at the speed of *Anudruta* (one-sixth of a *Matra*) the wise call it *Sphurita*.'

(3) *Kampita* (shake): 'This is also called *Khataka*. It lasts one-fourth of a *Matra*, prolonged with a trill.' 'A shake of the note at twice the speed of one-fourth of a *Matra* is known as *Kampita*.'



(4) *Lina* (melting away): 'When the slide passes over some intermediate note it is *Lina*.' 'The speed of *Lina* is that of half a *Matra*.' When a note at the speed of a quaver softly melts into another neighbouring note it is called *Lina*.

(5) *Andolita* (swing): 'It lasts one *Matra*, irrespective of the speed of singing—fast, medium or slow. When a swing lasting a *Matra* or crochet constitutes the grace it is called *Andolita*.' Ordinarily it is used to swing a note or notes gracefully.

(6) *Plavita* (overflow): 'When the shake of a note lasts three *Matras* it is called *Plavita*.'

(7) *Vali* (ripple): 'Any kind of fast sliding is called *Vali*.'

(8) *Kurula* (curl): 'This goes by the name of *Ghasit* at present.' *Kurula* is like a *Vali* but performed softly with a contracted throat.'

(9) *Mudrita* (closed): 'The grace is so called because it is produced by closing the mouth.'

(10) *Gumphita* (tied): 'A deep aspirate descending into the chest is known as *Gumphita*.'

(11) *Tribhinna* (three-fold): 'This is a compact ornament running through three notes at one stroke without any rest. A grace that touches three distinct points, and joins together the qualities of all the three, turning round the note in a single flow is known as *Tribhinna*.'

(12) *Ahata* (struck): 'Striking a neighbouring note and coming back,' that is *Ahata*. 'It consists of striking the next highest note, touching it lightly and quickly coming back.' Succession of *Ahatas* makes a sort of sobbing trill known as *Gadgadita* (tremble) and is to a large extent used in Indian music.

(13) *Ullasita* (gay): 'When two notes follow one another in order [the situation] is known as *Ullasita*.'

(14) *Namita* (bowing): '*Namita* is an ornament in which the notes come down to a lower pitch.'

(15) *Nivritta* (freed): It is the opposite of *Namita*. 'Touching another note for semi-quaver duration, but stopping without any tendency to come back is called *Nivritta*.'

(16) *Ghasit* is a way of sliding from a point to a point or

points. 'It is done by sliding (*Gharsana*) the finger along the string in either or perhaps both directions.' It differs somewhat from those given by the violin in frequency and spontaneousness.' It suits the unfretted instruments very well.

(17) *Mind*: It is a kind of shake but not an ordinary shake. It is 'a shake produced by rapidly pulling the strings between the frets of the stringed instruments giving out two notes whose interval may be as much as four semitones'. When the player is not content with a single note and desires to get the high one above it, he gives a suggestion of all the notes that lie in between, but without distracting the attention of the listener from the main note. This is unknown in Western music because of a preference for full tones which can only be produced on thick strings at a high tension. But the employment of quarter-tones makes it easy for Indians to use thin and longer wires at a low tension which enables the player here to deflect the string without disturbing the peg. 'The stopping of a finger of the left hand makes the note, which the right hand then plucks, and while it is vibrating, the left hand deflects it, which sharpens the note. If the note is stopped near the nut, only a slight sharpening, a semitone or two is possible; but if it is stopped in the middle of the string a sharpening of as much as four or five or even six semitones may be got.' Precisely it is a way of sliding from a note to the other at a stretch—it is not jumping but an artistic form of joining two notes. It suits the fretted instruments very well.

The distinction between *Mind* and *Ghasit* is that the former connects the notes by the tension of a wire while the latter joins the notes by reducing the length of the wire.

*Suth*: a kind of *Ghasit* by which a tone can be dragged to another.

*Murki*: a form of trill, it is a collective name for *Gitkiri*, *Zamzama*, *Khatka* and *Asa*. It is the attacking of two or three notes in a given time. When this motion is moderate it is called *Gitkiri*. Two notes with an interval of a semitone or less, when played quick with a trill or shake, rises to a

crescendo, giving a sense of their merging in one another with a frenzy, which is called *Zamzama*; and when it is lowest it is called *Khatka* or *Asa*. It is more suited to the female voice, due to the shortness of the female vocal chords. This suitability of *Mind* or *Ghasit* and *Murki* by the male and female voice respectively is a subject which lends itself to generalisation. All things being equal, the longer and thicker the sonorous body the better is the *Mind* or *Ghasit*. Again all things being equal, the shorter and thinner the sonorous body the better is the *Murki*. Or all things being equal, the longer the wave-length of the sonorous vibrations the better is the *Mind* or *Ghasit* and, again, all things being equal, the shorter the wave-length of the sonorous vibration the better is the *Murki*.

*Thonk*: melody produced by staccato notes.

*Murchana* is also called *Tar Tivra*, *Tamativra*, and *Ati Komal*. It is one-fourth part of a tone and is always produced along with the note of which it forms a part and its number is limited in each *Raga*. Of course there may be an increase in *Murchana* in a *Raga* in proportion with the number of *Komal Swaras* (semitone) that the *Raga* covers. Formerly they were generally distributed on the *Graha* and *Nyasa* in the hands of the Muslim masters but their number has admirably increased. It is a necessary ornament as the simple production of the notes of a *Raga* in a given time does not give a complete idea of a *Raga* so produced unless its *Murchanas* are added to the notes of which they form part. The *Murchana* is touched first or next to the note of which it forms the part and is never separated and never produced without *Mind* or *Ghasit*.

Now how does one produce it? Take for example the first *Murchana* which is between *Sa* (C) and *Komal Rishabha* (C Sharp). It can be produced in two ways: firstly by touching the *Sa* (C) and then the *Murchana* or by touching the *Komal Rishabha* (C Sharp or D Flat) and then the *Murchana*. It is needless to remind the readers that to touch *Sa* (C) by a *Mind* or a *Ghasit* one has to go first to *Ni* (B) or to *Komal Ni* (B Flat or A Sharp) or to *Dha* (A) or to *Komal Dha* (A

*Flat* or *G Sharp*). But when in a *Raga* the notes *Ni* (*B*), *Komal Ni* (*B Flat* or *A Sharp*) and *Dha* are excluded at first the note *Sa* (*C*) has to be touched from a note which suits the artiste's convenience, thence going to *Komal Rishabha* (*D Flat* or *A Sharp*), finally reverting to *Sa* (Tonic). Or he may go first to *Komal Rishabha* (*C Sharp* or *D Flat*) from *Sa* (*C*) and then to the *Murchana* before reverting to *Sa* (*C*). The effect thus produced becomes entrancing. When a *Mind* or a *Ghasit* does not show a *Murchana* it goes by the name of *Khadi*, and when it shows it, it is called *Suda*.

Over and above these there are a few other ornaments such as the following:

*Kan* is a touch upon a low or high note with a slight rapid jerk.

*Lag* is to leave a note suddenly and pass on to another note.

*Dant* is to show every note clearly.

*Urap* is to wind up the notes while ascending.

*Turap* is to reel out the notes while descending.

*Bhelava* is a slow mordent at the end and is a mixture of *Vali* and *Sphurita*.

Amalgamating one or more of the above graces together, many other mixed varieties of graces can be built up.

*Tana*—the word was originally known as *Tenaka* and formed one of six parts of the *Prabandha*—expressed auspiciousness. Sarangadeva defined it as 'a grouping of *Aksharas* used in instrumental music'. These *Tenakas* were used according to *Talas* of *Prabandhas* and might have been used in the *Alapa* without *Tala* which gradually became the *Tanas* now in vogue. In South India, and especially in Malabar, the old traditional singers sing *Tanams* according to *Talas*. *Tana* in the modern sense is not mentioned in any of the old musical texts.

*Tana*, or tonal variation, is a melodic figure formed by the combination of notes in rhythmic patterns. It has been defined as a 'weaving together of notes.'

It consists of a running or gliding over the rhythmic group-

ing of the notes with different permutations and combinations. Instead of a mere singing of solfas they are simply vocalised in vowels, *aa ee oo*. Only those notes are vocalised which express the *Raga* sentiment.

In ancient times it was the belief that, like *Murchanas*, the *Tanas* too, according to their types, when properly used had beneficial or malevolent effects on others.

In *Tana* singing the muscular excitement not only shows the strength of contraction but also the rapidity with which different muscular adjustments succeed one another.

These melodic figures are divided into two main groups: those that belong to one mode only and those belonging to two or more modes. The former is called *Shuddha* or pure *Tanas* and the latter *Kuta* or crooked ones. As a difference in any of the notes brings a change in the mode itself, only those melodic figures making use of the notes of one particular *Raga* can be said to belong to the *Shuddha* variety.

In a pure *Tana* is clearly revealed the form of the *Raga*, while in a crooked *Tana* the forms of two or more *Ragas* appear, as the combinations of notes that constitute them are common to several *Ragas*. For some reason best known to them alone the ancient writers have refrained from expounding the characteristic of the *Shuddha Tanas* in detail. Some of the medieval writers hold that they were developed from *Murchanas*.

The medieval music mentions only four varieties of *Tana*. They are:

*Shuddha* (Pure) *Tana*—*S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S*.

*Alamkarika* (Ornamented)—*S G R S, R.M.G.R.*

*Mishra* (Mixed)—*GRMGPM DP* etc.

*Kuta* (Crooked)—*SGGRS, PNNDP*, etc.

But in the later Muslim era, many other varieties were introduced which found due recognition among the musicians. They are seventeen in number and should be sung in the following order:

- (1) *Fikirfandi Tana*: This is attached to the improvisation in such a manner that it is very difficult for one who is not well conversant with time-measures to understand whether the singer is singing it whimsically or even rhythmically in the time pattern.
- (2) *Harakat Tana*: In this the notes which are more than four in number are attacked quickly in the fastest possible manner.
- (3) *Fanda* is to form knots of notes in the course of the movement of *Tanas* and then untie them by changing the direction of the *Tanas*.
- (4) *Jhatka* or the jerk: In this the last three notes are attacked with force and at the end the breath is exhaled.
- (5) *Bezarab Tana*: This is an imitation of the sound produced by striking the first note of the stringed instruments; with a shake the subsequent three or four notes are produced softly but attached to each other by deflection of the wires.
- (6) *Zarabdar Tana*: This is an imitation of sounds produced in sections on the stringed instruments by separate strokes on the strings.
- (7) *Gamak Tana*: This consists of two consecutive notes joined with a shake.
- (8) *Halaf Tana*: This is produced by singing the Ascent or the Descent in sections by the use of a wider voice compass, with a touch of slightly sharper microtones. This is sung as *aie aie* instead of *a a a* and this was introduced by Haddu and Hassu Khan of Gwalior.
- (9) *Sapat Tana*: This consists of a fast Ascent and a fast Descent.
- (10) *Firat Tana*: This is the return from the C of the highest octave of the sonant to the C of the lowest in the quickest possible time.
- (11) *Chhuta Tana*: This is the production of two crystal-like notes in jumps or leaps.
- (12) *Mushkilat Tana*: Here the skill lies in suggesting that

the *Raga* structure is being violated and producing in the drummer the fear of slipping away from the rhythmic movement.

- (13) *Zamzama Tana*: Here the *Tana* is sung with a swing in consecutive notes and is generally used in the *Tappa* style of singing.
- (14) *Boltana*: This consists of singing the words of the music blended with the *Tana*.
- (15) *Murki Tana*: This is an imitation of the sound produced by sweeping the fingers over many frets of a sitar after striking its wires.
- (16) *Charkhi Tana*: This is sung in a fast rhythm moving about the specified notes of the *Raga* in a whirl.
- (17) *Chowguni Tana*: In this *Tana* four notes are sung in every beat (*Matra*) in a fast rhythm.

The *Tanas* are sung with a vowel *A* following the advice of Bharata who says, 'Prolific ornaments (if such be needed) are best used without being attached to a consonant sound.'

*Palta*—*Tana* done on a stringed instrument played by plucking.

*Laraj*—using the lowest range of voice for ornamentation or singing the melody.

It is necessary to explain here the terms *Tarkib* (ways) and *Kartab* (doing). The creation of new ornaments, graces and decorations to adorn a *Raga* is known as *Kartab* and adding them appropriately and artistically to the *Raga* expression is *Tarkib*. Each *Kartab* has its respective *Tarkib*; together they go to make the individual styles of the different masters known as *Gharwanas* or traditions. •

It must be remembered that 'the ornamentation must be in the right place: the girdle should not be fastened around the bust,' says Bharata.

The following are some of the operations on the stringed instruments played with the plectra.

*Bols* are the note-sounds emitted by the stringed instruments played with the plectra.

These *Bols* are formed by two movements of the plectra,

in and out. The stroke which is given *in* is named *Da* and the one *out* is called *Ḍa*. When the *in* and *out* strokes combine and are produced by the double movement of the plectra in which *Da* and *Ḍa* combine it is called *Did*; and this process of giving the strokes *in* and *out*, if reversed, goes by the name *Dada* or *Did*.

- (1) *Bol-making*—note-sounds used to make the musical phrases.
- (2) *Gats*—the *Raga* scores made up of *Bols*.
- (3) *Dhua*—*Bol* in *Chikari*.
- (4) *Math*—this consists of *Bol-making* in *Chikari*, as well as on the main string.
- (5) *Toda*—the alternating of *Bols* in small *Tal*.
- (6) *Joda*—playing *Da, Da, Da* or *Da Ra Da Ra* without too many *Tans*.
- (7) *Jhora*—it is the bare melody played on the veena with the two fingers in which each note is brought out separately without any portmanteau.
- (8) *Tanjhora*—it is *Jhora* played quickly.
- (9) *Thonk*—it resembles *Jhora* but is always played loud and fast.
- (10) *Thonkjhala*—it consists of a mixture of *Thonk* and *Jhora*.
- (11) *Tarparan*—in this the strings are struck by rapid front and back strokes of the finger, as in Russian *Balalaika*.
- (12) *Jhala*—the elongation of any single note produced by striking the pair of *Chikari* (steel wires) of a sitar by the *in* movement of the middle or little finger of the right hand.

If, for example, the note *C* (*Sa*) is to be elongated, first, one has to strike *C* (*Sa*) on the wire of *F*, and then the *Chikari* wire is pulled inward and struck.



WORKS CONSULTED

*Bayupuran*

Sarangadeva: *Sangeeta Ratnakara*

Allain Danielou: *North Indian Music*

Ramachandran: *Ragas of Carnatic Music*

Bharata: *Natya Shastra*

Raja Man: *Mankutuhāl*

Akram Khan: *Madanul Mosoqui*

Sadiq Ali Khan: *Sramaya Isharat*

Sadaat Ali Khan: *Nagma-e-Sadar*

## 17. The Pulse and Heart-Beat of Music

MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS achieve unity in a variety of ways. The foremost and most conspicuous of these is *time* which in India is known as *Tala* from *Kara-tala*, literally meaning *bottom* of hand—Indians keep time by clapping palms. *Tala* is an important factor in all kinds of music as it regulates the relative durations of musical sounds.

By making a sequence tones are alternated with their subdivisions—semibreve with two crotchets and so on carried to foot or Bar, which confers on music its distinguishing rhythmic character.

There are two different ways in which rhythm enters into music. First, all music—including even the insignificant ditty—finds its existence in relation to a rhythmic framework which may be termed the time-pattern. The music itself may not accentuate this time-pattern, but it moves in such a way that the listeners remain conscious of its existence. Over and above this, music has its own rhythmic designs—the rhythms we actually hear in the melodies. The first is the skeleton of music, the second its flesh and blood. The idea of the two kinds of rhythm existing side by side may be difficult to grasp in the abstract.

In the use of innumerable rhythms and time-measures, both simple and complex, Indian music stands without parallel. The time-measures of the music of other countries constitute but a fraction of those used in India.

Time-measure is to music what metre is to poetry. Vedic hymns are the original sources from which the latter-day

rhythm and beat were derived. We have already seen that the Vedic hymns were not mere verses but possessed tonal expressiveness. Words in poetry only express an idea or ideas but their rhythmic flow unfolds a deeper meaning.

The hymns of the Veda, we are told, used only three time-lengths, viz., the *Hrasva* (short), the *Dirgha* (long) and *Pluta* (extra long), which were the measures of one, two and three units. In the *Gathas* the *Udatta* notes were sung in *Pluta* so that the hymns might be musical and not merely rhythmic. Musical time in India was thus a development from the metres of poetry and in the beginning used to have the same number of divisions as those of the metrical lines of the poem.

But the rhythm of the poetry mainly depends on the actual movement of the words governed by their sense and length rather than on the tones regulated by stress. This measurement of time by the long or short syllables in poetry is a real impediment to the recurrence of stress and rest on the principle of periodicity which music demands. It was soon realised that 'the musical rhythm, in contrast to the mere temporal rhythm of measures, grows out of the Gestalt—relations of the motif itself.'<sup>1</sup> Though soon the musical time followed an independent path of its own, yet it has to be admitted that both the time in music and the metre in poetry are based on the same principle of mathematics.

As the rhythm of a verse can easily be distinguished from its metre, so the rhythm or *Laya* of music can easily be known from timing in India. Western musicians cannot at times distinguish between rhythm and regular timing. To them *Laya* is a different thing altogether which does not mix with regular beating or *Tala*, though, in reality, they go side by side.

Great stress has always been laid on the 'exact time value' of syllables in a verse, as the element of accent is absent in Indian poetry, the time length being all important. This may account for the great development of time-measures in Indian music. The divisions of the line of a verse into words with selected accents is not at all important in Indian poetry and therefore music does not attach any importance to it. Words are more often set to music here, rather than the music to

words; that is why the time-measures become so important.

People generally do not make a distinction between time and rhythm, but there is a real difference between the two. While rhythm may apply to the fundamental beat of a march in a waltz, it properly refers to the time values of the musical notes themselves, their actions and their grouping in logical *phrases*, which is called *Laya* in Indian music. It has been defined as 'the expression of the instinct for order in sound which governs the human ear'. Even as a regular succession of the vibration is necessary to make the notes musical so is the proper blending of the concordant notes at regular intervals necessary to create a melody. The duty of *Laya* is to maintain accurately the uniformity of the span of units in a time measure. This is particularly true of Indian music as it is 'modal in time as well as in melody'.

There are three varieties of rhythm—*Vilambit*, *Madhya* and *Drut*—corresponding to the slow, medium and fast tempos respectively of Western music. The medium is double the speed of the slow tempo, and the fast, twice as fast as the medium. 'The best way to approach the Indian rhythm is to pay attention to the phrasing and ignore the pulsation.'

Whatever may be the tempo, the music has a normal speed unit, i.e. it is in crotchets, as the Westerner would say, or else in quavers and so on. Doublings and halvings of *Matra* (time-unit)—very similar to augmentations and diminutions—are common and have names. The normal speed is called *Bara-bari* (time-to-time)—it is also called *Dha* from the average length of the principal drum beat of the name. The alternations of this speed depend on the crotchet as unit.

A *Tala*, or time-cycle, is a rhythmic time measured in *Avertas* (Bar) of a specific length composed of specific time-units.

The rhythm of a *Tala* is made prominent by *Bhari*, or stress, and *Khali*, or wave of hand, at suitable intervals within each *Avarta*.

A *Tala* may consist of two or more bars having a group of two or more units of time either joined together or repeated as many times as it is necessary to make up the total number of *Matras* assigned to a *Tala*.

Time is the pulse or beat, whereas the rhythm of *Laya* is the swing of a musical phrase. A phrase of music may be likened to a clause in written or spoken language. Two or more musical phrases combine to make a period, even as clauses combine to make a sentence. They are marked by cadences which are natural moments of pause.

The unit of musical time in India, known as *Kala*, consists of different numbers of *Aksharas*, or letters, as illustrated below:

<i>Anudruta</i>	1 <i>Akshara</i>	$\frac{1}{4}$ <i>Matra</i>
<i>Druta</i>	2 <i>Akshara</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ <i>Matra</i>
<i>Laghu</i>	4 <i>Akshara</i>	1 <i>Matra</i>
<i>Guru</i>	8 <i>Akshara</i>	2 <i>Matra</i>
<i>Pluta</i>	12 <i>Akshara</i>	3 <i>Matra</i>
<i>Kakpad</i>	16 <i>Akshara</i>	4 <i>Matra</i>

The time taken in pronouncing a short vowel is called *Kala* and the syllabic instants are *Matras* where *Matra* is taken as the shortest time in which a syllable can be properly pronounced.

It is purely an arbitrary unit which within itself may contain either a few or many notes and may last only a fraction of a second or several seconds. Within each measure are smaller units which represent sounds (beats) and rests (silence) of various time-values such as whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, one-eighth notes and so on. A certain number of these fractional notes or rests add up to form a measure just as annas and pies add up to the full rupee. But the arithmetic of music differs from that of money, for while four silver quarters make a rupee, some musical compositions require only three quarters to each measure while some others require four and still others five.

*Tala* and *Laya* (in the context of time) are used for two different purposes, the former for measuring rhythmic time and the latter as an ornamentation. With regard to rhythm, two things are singular in this country. First, the variety of metre is more important than that of accent; and secondly, cross metres greatly enhance listeners' interest.

The ancient theorists held—and perhaps correctly—that about three vowels could be pronounced coherently during one beat of the pulse and this is still the rule for the duration of a *Matra*, though it is not rigid. The approximate Western equivalent to a *Matra* is half a crotchet, *Laghu* to minim. There is in this respect very little difference between the Western and Indian systems, but while the Western semibreve and its subdivisions represent the time for which a particular note is sounded, the Indian *Laghu* etc. show the interval between the two strokes of a *Tala* without any reference to the notes.

*Laya*, or rhythm, can be defined as the arrangement or order in sound governed by the stressed and unstressed. The stress falling at some well-ordered intervals is called *Tala* or beat.

The stop of *Laya* is known as *Sam* or *Avasana* (stroke) and it is shown by the clap of the hands. *Sam* is the point where the *Tala* ends its course, on which the singer or the instrumentalist also converges one of the circles of his rhythm either with the *Vadi* (consonant) or *Samvadi* (subsonant) or the tonic. In Carnatic music this circle of time usually ends in *Mirtay* which is generally on the second beat. It ends mostly on the first *Matra* in Hindustani music although there are some exceptions.

Time is always expressed by two numbers, one indicating how many beats there are to a measure and the other the 'value' of each beat. Three-fourth time, for instance, means three beats to a measure, each beat having the value of a quarter note. Three-eighth time, on the other hand, means three beats, each having the value of an eighth of a note.

All *Talas* do not have an equal number of *Matras* or the same number of beats. *Talas* are defined by the number of *Matras* they contain in each of their divisions. *Talas* which contain an equal number of beats in each of their divisions are *Samapadi*. And *Talas* in which the divisions are unequal are called *Vishamapadi*; others which have equal and unequal divisions alternately are known as *Ardha Samapadi*. The distance from one beat to the other is called *Anga* (limb). The weak beats are shown by the simple wave of the hand

rather than by the clap; that is why they are called *Khali* or vacant. *Khali* indicates a phase of time circle and helps to maintain the sequence of the bars. It also helps the artists to foresee the *Sam*, however deep he may be in his improvisation, as the *Khali* just precedes the *Sam*, thus alerting him. According to Indian authorities the space between it and its next place of rest is called *Purnamancha*.

*Avarta*, or a circle, contains two or more *Vibhagas*, i.e. sub-sections, or bars, each of which is constituted by a number of *Angas*, each of which in its turn consists of one or more time units. The *Virama* or the rest is used for lengthening the *Druta* or *Laghu* by any fraction.

The *Chandas*, or the structural arrangements of the *Matras*, are the guiding principle of *Tala* which marks out one *Tala* from another even when not named.

At the present day a singer or an instrumentalist, instead of pausing in the place of its natural rest completes the *Avarta* in the following *Matra*. For instance, in the *Pata Tala* which runs as *Dha A Dhin Na* the natural place of rest is at *Na* but it is always completed at *Dhin*. According to textual injunction this process is wrong as it does not stand the test of reason. *Pata Tala* consists of two breves and two semi-breves. Taking the first *Matra* as the place of first *Sam*, if the pause is not shown on the third or fourth *Matra* and the beat is given on the fifth *Matra*, it naturally becomes a measure of five *Matras* instead of four. There we are faced with the question why the musician does not fall off the measure when the beat is given at the fifth *Matra* instead of at the fourth. The reason is simple. The measure moves in a circle like the minute-hand of a clock and the musician is therefore never off the track.

As for *Ragas*, so for *Talas* too the Indian theorists have listed ten main features. They are:

*Kala*: a unit of time which marks the place where one rests while singing or playing an instrument.

*Marga*: each *Tala* has its peculiar movement and this is known as *Marga* (path).

*Pinda*: it tells the number of *Laghu* or *Guru* or *Pluta* which constitutes the *Tala*. *Pinda* means body.

*Anga*: literally it is a 'limb' of the time measure.

*Graha*: it is the starting point of the *Tala*. It is called *Sam* when the music commences before the *Tala* and it is called *Anagata* when it commences after the *Tala*.

*Jati*: indicates a grouping of the *Matras*. There are five such *Jatis*.

- i) *Chatusra Jati* which consists of four *Matras*. *Talas* consisting of 4, 8, 16 and 32 *Matras* belong to this class.
- ii) *Tisra Jati* contains three *Matras*. *Talas* consisting of 3, 6, 9 and 12, 24 *Matras* belong to this class.
- iii) *Misra Jati* consists of seven *Matras* and combined *Talas* of (i) and (ii) *Jatis*.
- iv) *Khanda Jatis* have five *Matras*. *Talas* of 5, 10 and 15 *Matras* belong to this class.
- v) *Sankirna Jati* consists of nine *Matras* and *Talas* having 9, 18 and 36 *Matras* belong to this class.

*Kal*: a time unit similar to a demi semibreve.

*Laya*: it is the rhythm of movement of evenness in speed. There are nine kinds of *Laya*. They are:

- i) *Thaya*. Suppose a singer is singing in a *Choutala* whose *bols* complete in four *Avartas* each consisting of 12 *Matras* thus totalling 48 *Matras*. When this whole song is sung at the same speed with which it was begun it is known as *Thaya Laya*.
- ii) *Ardha Thaya*. When the speed of the same song is halved and it is sung within eight *Avartas*, i.e. 96 *Matras*, the *Laya* is said to be *Ardha Thaya*.
- iii) *Ardh Laya*. When the same music is set to two *Avartas*, i.e. 32 *Matras*, the tempo is known as *Ardh Laya*.
- iv) *Dwiguna Laya*. When the music is completed with-



in two *Avartas*, i.e. 24 *Matras*, the tempo is *Dwiguna Laya*.

- v) *Triguna Laya* is completing the same song in 16 *Matras*.
- vi) *Chaturguna Laya*. When the same song is completed within one *Avarta* having two *Matras* it is known as *Chaturguna Laya*.
- vii) *Kuardh* is half of *Ardha Laya*.
- viii) *Birad Laya* consists of an *Ardh* and *Kuardh Laya* together.
- ix) *Pechida* is the *Ardh* and *Birad Layas* combined together in which the *Sam* is never shown.

*Kriya* is the manner of counting time. It indicates the constituent *angas* of a *tala*. The counting of the beats or waves-of-hand are different forms of the *Kriya*. A beat is called *Sasabda* (the sounded) and a wave is called *Nisabda* (unsounded) *Kriya*.

The *Khalis* are also known as *Yatis*. They are of five kinds:

- i) *Sam Yati*—where all the beats of a *Tala* are attacked with the same speed.
- ii) *Visham Yati*—where the first beat is attacked in a faster tempo and the last in the medium.
- iii) *Mridanga Yati*—where the first beat is attacked in the fast tempo, the middle in the medium and the last again as the first.
- iv) *Pluta Yati*—where the first and last beats are attacked in a medium tempo and the middle in the fast tempo.
- v) *Gopuchha Yati*—where the first beat is attacked in the medium, middle in fast and the last in medium again.

*Prastara*, i.e. spreading out or elaborating a *Tala*, is only of academic interest and shows the height to which the genius of a man can reach in calculating pure rhythm. It means the

splitting up of the *Angas* into all their possible component parts and presenting them with all possible varieties in a tabular manner.

From the point of view of rhythm, the attack on sound can be made in three ways: on the beat, or *Sam*; off the beat, or *Atita*; and before the beat, known as *Anagata* (not arrived). When the rhythm follows accurately the same timing of the music or dance and the stroke of the drum and the clap of hands are simultaneous, the result is *Sam*. A *Tala*, instead of going at a regular interval, sometimes changes the point *Sam* to a half or quarter of a *Matra*. The former is called *Agata* or *Atita* (past) and the latter *Anagata* (coming).

In ancient times, only seven *Talas* known as *Jatis*, were used; these are used even today in the South. They are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Name of <i>Tala</i>	No. of <i>Matras</i> taking <i>Laghu</i> of 4 <i>Matras</i>	No. of strokes
<i>Ek Tala</i>	4	1
<i>Rupaka</i>	2+4=6	2
<i>Jhampa</i>	4+1+2=7	3
<i>Tripata</i>	4+2+2=8	3
<i>Mathya</i>	4+2+4=10	3
<i>Atha</i>	4+4+2+2=12	4
<i>Dhruva</i>	4+2+4+4=14	4

In course of time our music masters created another set of 28 *Talas* by changing the value of *Laghu* to 3, 5, 4 and 9 *Matras* and giving new names to each of the 35 *Talas*. (No *Laghus* with the values of 6 and 8 *Matras* were taken into consideration as they were double of 3 and 4.) Some new *Talas* were obtained by repeating one or the other *Tala*. The longest *Tala* that could be constructed, without repetition was one of 27 *Matras*. It was called *Dhruva Tala* with a *Laghu* of 9 *Matras*; *Talas* of more than 16 *Matras* were seldom used.

By the time of Sarangadeva, we find various *Talas* of greater length reaching up to 60 and 70 *Matras*.

From a careful study and analysis of the *Jati Talas*, it can be seen that in ancient times only four strokes were contemplated. It is by splitting up some of the strokes that we have at the present day more than four strokes; but in most cases, the excess are counted as *Khali*.

The difference between the Indian and the Western time measures may be stated thus: 'Indian rhythm moves in *Avartas* (bars) broken up into *Vibhagas* (beats) each of which consists of one or more *Tala*. It can equally be said that the western one moves in sections broken up into bars, each of which contains one or more beats. In what, then, does the difference between the two systems consist? It may be answered that ours is derived from song, theirs from the dance or the march. Though both are based on the numbers two and three we add—and they multiply—in order to form combinations of these. But the answer which goes deepest is that our music is in modes of time, and their music changes the mode at will, principally by means of harmony. In order that rhythm, an articulation of the infinite variety of sounds, may be upon some regular plan, the plan must have some recognisable unit of measurement. India takes the short note and gives it a certain value as opposed to the long. Europe takes the stressed note and gives it in a particular rhythm, a certain frequency, as against the unstressed, and graduates its force. They find the unity of the rhythm in the recurrent bar (which is always double or triple time, just as their two melodic modes are either major or minor), and have to look elsewhere for the variety; we find the variety in the *Vibhaga*, whose constitution is extremely various, and must look elsewhere for the large spaces of time; we find unity in *Avarta*, and they find variety in sections. Indian rhythms have their *raison d'être* in the contrast of long and short duration, and to identify these with much or little stress is to vulgarise the rhythms. Stress and pulses demand regularity; duration is complementary and revels in irregularity. In order to get the true sense of duration they have to get rid of stress."

Among the innumerable time measures, only a few are used in song. The bulk of them belong to the sphere of pure rhythm. They are either played with dance or in solo. Even as a musician sings a *Raga*, weaving various designs in the pattern without creating any monotony, so can the mridanga and tabla player take up a *Tala* and weave a pattern as good as a *Raga* with his mnemonics.

In India the drum is inseparable from music. Mridanga or pakhwaj as it is also called, is used both in the North and in the South, but in the North it only accompanies the *Dhrupad* and *Hori-Dhamar* songs. Tabla is a Muslim innovation and was introduced in the latter part of the 15th century and accompanies *Kheyal* and other lighter varieties.

The drum is used to articulate the metre of the singer's melody or to add variety to it by means of cross metre. There are four main elements in drumming, viz., quality, intensity, pitch of the sounds, and the intervals between them.

In Indian music the graduated intensity is very little regarded, either in singing or playing or in drumming, because our whole scheme is not accentual but quantitative. It is true that the first of the bars is often louder than the rest, but not always; this is because two quantitative schemes are apt to coincide there, and two sounds are naturally louder than one. The time intervals are of paramount importance and show great variety. It is seldom that more than a few bars out of hundreds are drummed in exactly the same way, and the drumming is practically continuous. It is only occasionally that it is silenced for special contrast. The pitch again is highly important, for it is invariably the keynote, and frequently the drum is the singer's only accompaniment. Lastly, the maximum variety is got into the quality, and this, not mainly by a variety of instruments. The variety is got out of the drum or a pair of drums like the tabla. They are played on with the full hand and the fingers. There are half a dozen strokes for the right hand, and three or four for the left. "The beat with the left hand is like the seam of my coat, that must be there; the other notes with the right hand are like the embroidery I may put according to my own fancy over

the seam,' said a drummer. 'The notes are differentiated not by their pitch but by their quality. They are also articulated by great intricacy of time intervals.'<sup>3</sup>

Indians seem to have taken great pains to form the technical vocabulary of their drumming and made an art of it. The peculiarity of the Indian pakhwaj or tabla bayan is that it is generally attuned to the fundamental of the singer; with the stringed instrument it is generally tuned to *Panchama* (G) of the instrument. It is played by the palms and fingers of both hands at the edge, at the middle, and on the centre of the two circles. The fingers of the right hand are more freely used than those of the left hand. The stroke which is produced in the middle of the right side by the right palm is *Ta*; the stroke by the same palm on the centre of the black circle is called *Ti* or *Tin*. The stroke which is produced at the edge of the index finger of the right hand is *Na*. The similar arrangement (four fingers except the thumb), if manipulated by the left hand on the left side, is *Ga*, *Ghi* and *Ghin* and *Ka* respectively. When the right palm and fingers of the left hand produce a stroke jointly in the middle of their respective circles, it is *Dha*—the usual but not an invariable sign of *Avasana*. *Dha* is a compound stroke of *Ta* and *Ga*. A compound stroke of *Ti* or *Tin* and *Ghin* is called *Dhin*. This arrangement is slightly changed in tabla bayan, as a pakhwaj is handled more with palm and the fingers of the left hand (all except the thumb and the last finger are used separately) than with individual fingers. The pakhwaj is played more by the fingers than by palms and even the fingers of the left hand are used more freely and separately.

The pakhwaj deals more with resonant words as *Dha* and its combinations, *Ghi* and its combinations and *Tho* and its combinations, whereas tabla bayan deals in *Ga* and its combinations, *Ta* and its combinations, *Dig* and its combinations and *Na* and its combinations. This is due to the palms being more freely used in the former, and fingers in the latter.

By striking different places with the fingers or the palm, sometimes by releasing them or damping or thudding, different qualities of tones are produced. These are *Bols* (words).

By adjusting the palms and the fingers at different points on the right and left side of the instruments we get 13 letters in all which are used to compose the *Thekas* and *Parans*. These letters are:

*Ka, Ga, Gha, Ta, Da, Dha, Ti, Tha, Di, Dhi, Na, Ma*  
and *Ra*.

A combination of the above letters form:

1st series: *Ka* or *Ki, Kdan, Kit* and *Kid*.

2nd series: *Ga* or *Gi, Gan, Gadi* or *Gdi*.

3rd series: *Ghdan, Ghit, Ghid* and *Ghin*.

4th series: *Ta, Ti* or *Tu, Tak, Tag, Tit, Tin* or *Tun, Tir* or *Tran*.

5th series: *Tho, Thun*.

6th series: *Di* and *Dag* or *Dig*.

7th series: *Dha, Dhdun, Dhig, Dhit, Dhid, Dhin, Dhir, Dhleng, and Dhun*.

8th series: *Na, Nak* and *Nag*.

#### *Two syllable combinations*

1st series: *Ka-Ta, Ka-Dha, Kdan-Ta, Kdan-Dha, Kit-ta, Kid-Tak, Kit-Tun, Kid-Dhun, Kid-Na, Kid-Nag*.

2nd series: *Ga-Ta, Ga-Dha, Ga-Dhin, Gdi-Gan* or *Gadi-Gan*.

3rd series: *Ghit-Tak, Ghid-Tit, Ghid-Nag, Ghdan-Ta, Ghdan-Dha, and Ghit-Thun*.

4th series: *Ta-Kit, Tha-Thum, Tag-Tit, Tir-Kit*.

5th series: *Thi-Kit, Thun-Ga, Thun-Ta, Thun-Thun, Thun-Dha, Thun-Na*.

6th series: *Dig-Ta, Dig-Dha, Dig-Nag*.

7th series: *Dha-Kit, Dha-Tit, Dhig-Nag, Dhir-Kit, Dhi-Lang, Dhum-Kit*.

8th series: *Na-Kit, Nag-Tit, Nag-Dhit, Nag-Thun, Nag-Dhum* or *Dhum*.

When the above combinations are given the same time which is given to the one syllable combinations the speed will be relatively double.

The monosyllabic combinations of drum letters show that out of twelve letters (the 13th being obsolete) eight are used as initials as well as final (excepting *Ghi*) and the remaining four *T*, *D*, *M*, *N* are used only as final. The way in which the above combinations are made and the addition of the nasal sounds *M*, and *N*, viz. *Kdan*, *Gan* etc., are only used in pronouncing and not in playing.

The drum words or *Bols* are distributed in drum phrases (*Thekas*), which are the drummer's *Memoria Technica* for the particular *Tala*, and the drum variants are known as *Parans*. The *Thekas* are meant to keep up the *Tala* and the *Parans* are intended to swell it.

*Kotri* is the mnemonic of the first *Avartas* of a time-measure with which the drumming is begun. *Kotri* means a house. Three shortened repetitions of the *Bols* and brilliant tempo—this is called *Tora*. *Mohra*, the shortest possible rhythmical arrangement of mnemonics, equalling half *Avartas* by which the musician and the percussion-instrumentalist plays through the *Mukhras*, meets at the *Sam*.

*Tala Trital Matra* 8, equivalent to *C* time of Western music:

<i>Tala</i>	1	2	0	3				
<i>Matra</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	1		2		0		3	
<i>Kotri Bol</i>	<i>Dhi</i>	<i>Dhintā</i>	<i>Dhi</i>	<i>Dhintā</i>	<i>Ti</i>	<i>Tintā</i>	<i>Ta</i>	
	1		2		0		3	

*Mohra-Katta Kidhanak Katina Ghin Nak Tar-Kit Tak Dha.*

*Paran.*—*Dhagitat Katta Dhagitat Ta Tagitat Katta Dhagitat Katta Dha.*

*Chakradhar Paran*—is a more elaborate variation of the drum syllables with a thrice recurring repetition of a phrase.

The alteration of the sounds between the two drums being incessant and instantaneous helps them to merge.

By the principle of doubling the *Tala* can merge either with itself or with another. For this one bar is played by one hand while two bars of its double (*Duni*) are played by the other.

But it is very difficult to realise this difficulty. I suggest that the readers attempt to produce instantaneously with the hands *Tritala* with *Chowtala* (*Ada* or  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ) and *Tritala* with *Sulfakta* (*Ku-ada* or  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ) or, in other words, the *Tritala* and *Chowtala* and *Tritala* with *Surfaktala*. These should be regulated in such a way as to converge their respective *Sams* or *Avasanas*.

How is this done? Let us take 12 consecutive figures from 1 and ending with 12. Now in *Chowtala* there would be 4 strokes and 2 rests. The strokes would be on 1, 5, 9 and 11 and the rests on 3 and 7. We already know that *Sam* is on 1, if not mentioned otherwise. In the same manner, *Tritala* will be divided in 4 points (*Matras*) composed of 3 strokes coming on 1, 4 and 10 and the rest coming on 7. The *Sam* is on 1. The following arrangement of the two above-mentioned *Talas* will demonstrate how their respective *Sams* converge:

*Chawtala*—1 (2), 3, (4), 5, 6.

Series. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

*Tritala*—1, 2 (3).

*Tin.* 1 2 0 3 / 1 2 0 3 / 1 2 0 3 / 1 2 0 3 /

*Dur.* 1 0 2 3 0 / 1 0 2 3 0 / 1 0 2 3 0 / 1 0 2 3 0 /

"There is one other principle of disposing the beats and silences which accounts for a few out-of-the-way *Tala*. It consists of cumulating the beats and punctuating those by blanks."<sup>4</sup>

In the above the cumulative elements tend to throw stress upon the final beats. This accordingly becomes the first bar.

To break the monotony or dead uniformity the instrumentalist or singer at times reduces the original time (*Barobari*) or speed to one half; or at times he doubles it (*Duni*) or or quadruples it (*Chouguni*). And as a matter of course the drummer adopts the same course. *Tha* (one half) *Barobari* (equal), *Duni* (double) and *Chouguni* are relative terms and



their relation to each other stands as follows.

*Tha* is equal to semibreve, *Barobari* to minim, *Duni* to crotchet, *Chouguni* to the quaver in *Tan* (variation); but they never go further than this; or, in other words, they use a semi-quaver, not a demi-semi-quaver.

At times they accelerate the original time (*Barobari*) or speed to one and one-half (*Ada* or *Dedi*) or to one and one-fourth (*Kuada* or *Sevai*).

To be precise, this is done by changing the fractional measurements of the *Matras* of an *Avarta* by cross-time scanning, and after completing one or more cycles a return is made on the *Sam* of the original recurring rhythm. For instance in *Tintala* (16 *Matras*) by accelerating or slowing the scanning by a fractional count the number of *Matras* may be increased to 24 *Dedi* ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ ), 20 *Swai* ( $1\frac{1}{4}$ ), 14 *Pauduni* ( $1\frac{5}{7}$ ) and so on. In *Dedi*, the 16 *Matras* are accelerated uniformly by reducing the interval between the *Matras* by a half unit; thus increasing the number of *Matras* by eight more and bringing the total to 24. In *Sawai*, the interval is reduced by a quarter unit. There is an addition of four more *Matras* and the total is 20. *Pauduni* shows a decrease in the number of *Matras*. Instead of 16 *Matras* there are now 14. In this case the interval between the *Matras* is increased by a quarter unit.

As Indian music is poly-rhythmical and in it one often meets, when the drummer and the singer or the instrumentalist are in competition, varied and extremely complicated cross-rhythms which are difficult to understand unless a few basic terms are realised. These are given hereunder.

*Avarta* or *Aorta* is the rhythmical arrangement of *Bols* from *Sam* to *Sam*.

*Theka* is the rhythmical arrangement of *Bols* in proper sequences in a full *Avarta*.

*Kism* is the playing of *Bols* in a bar or a *Tala* in various ways without effecting any change in the *Tala* arrangement.

*Tukra* is a brilliant rhythmic sequence running from one to three *Avartas* excelling in double or triple timing using all the devices of tricky tempos, similar to a *Tana* of a song or the *Joda* of the sitar.

*Mukhra* is the small arrangement of *Bols* by which the percussionist starting from the very *Khali* or *Sam* plays a piece of arrangement of *Bols* to cover up another *Khali* or synchronise with another *Sam*.

*Mohra* is that small arrangement of *Bols*, shorter than *Mukhra*, by the playing of which three times, the tabla player reaches the *Sam*, while accompanying the singer or the instrumentalist.

*Paran* is that brilliant rhythmic arrangement of *Bols*, two or more *Avartas* in length, which starting from *Sam* or any other *matra* and repeating the *Bols*, synchronise the *Sam* with *Dha*.

*Kaida* is the arrangement of *Bols* composed according to the *Tala* division running to one or more *Avartas*.

*Palta* is the playing of *Bols* of *Kaida* differently maintaining the form of the *Kaida*.

*Gat* is an arrangement of *Bols* different from *Paran*, *Kaida*, *Peshkara* etc. which in the beginning is played in slow tempos, then twice in the double tempo and four times in the quadruple tempo.

*Rela* is the playing in fast tempos of an arrangement of eight *Aksharas* in one *Matra* played in *Madhya* or medium tempo.

*Laggi* is the playing of *Bols* of smaller *Talas* arranged in the *Kaharwa* metre.

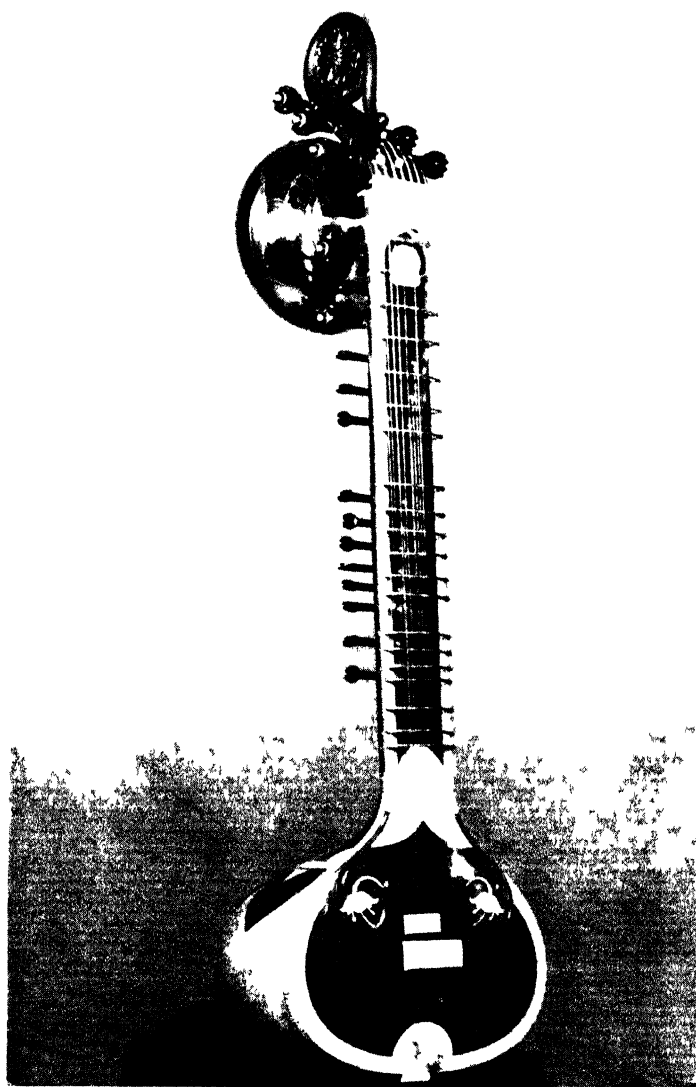
*Bat* is the playing of *Palta* arranged in the *Kaharwa* metre.

*Ladi* is playing of *Bols* from the *Palta* of a *Laggi* forcefully for some time.

*Chakradhar Tukra* is the arrangement of *Bols* ending in *Tihai* which after running its course synchronises thrice with *Sam*.

*Peshkara* is a complex but brilliant *Kaida* with which the tabla player starts his solo playing *Bat* and *Palta* within it without spoiling the form. It is so called because the tabla player presents (*Pesh*) his art through it.

These are the cross rhythms. *Larant* is the delineation of the contrast of two different rhythms generated by the artist and percussion player when in competition without disturbing the *Sam*.

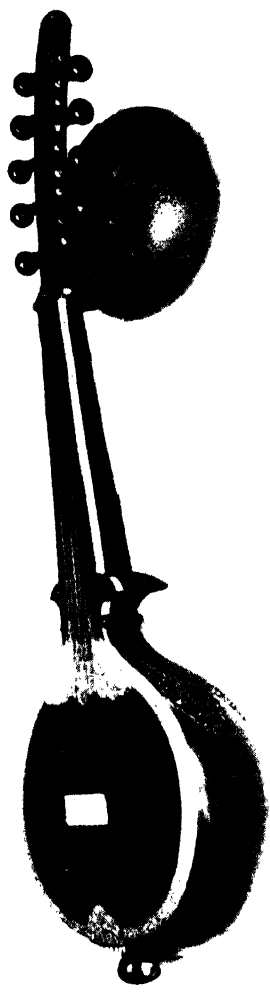


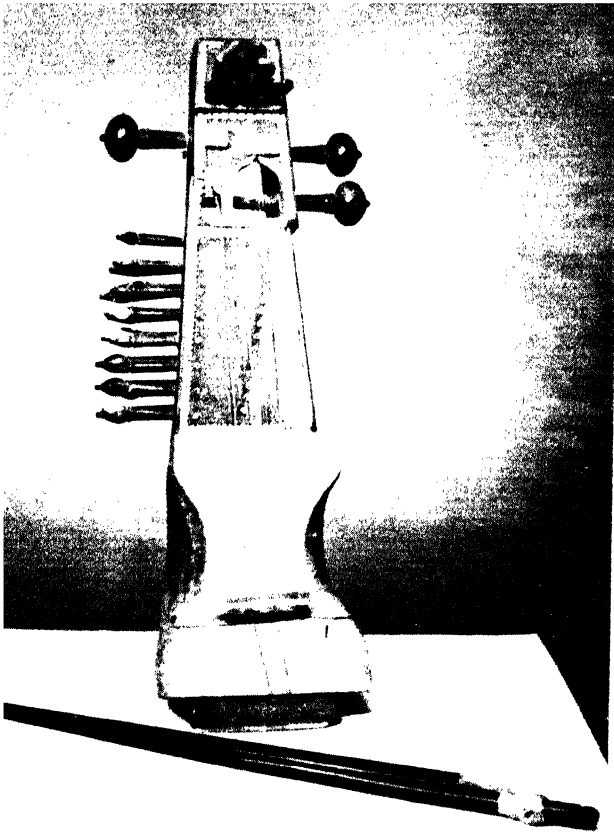
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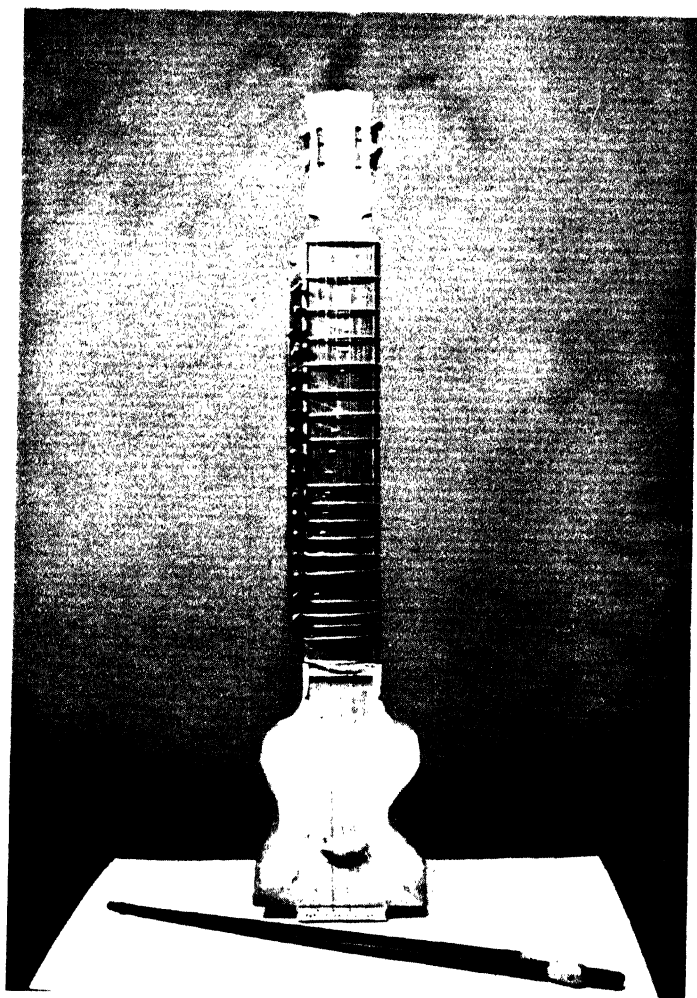
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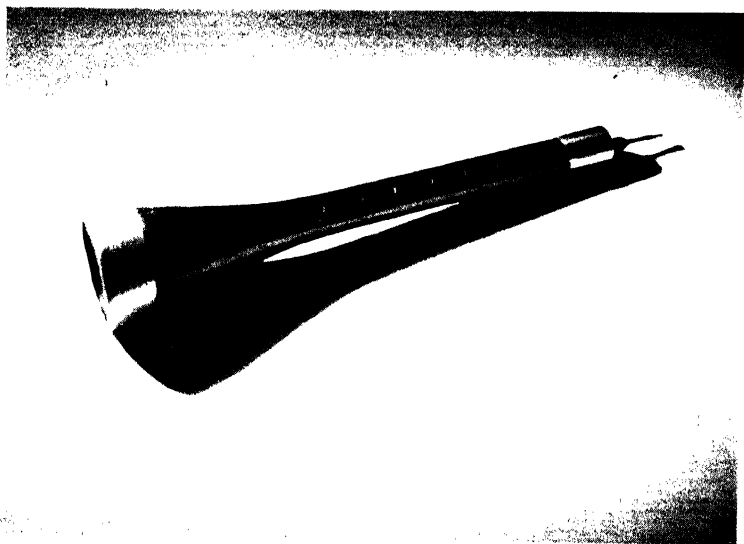




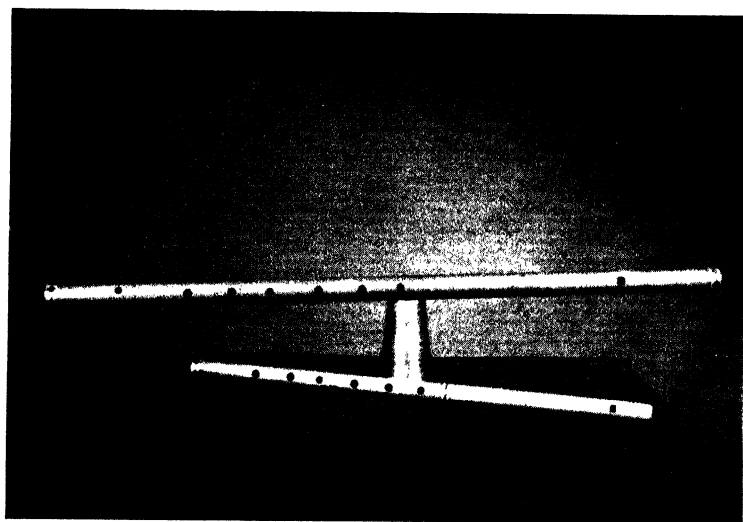
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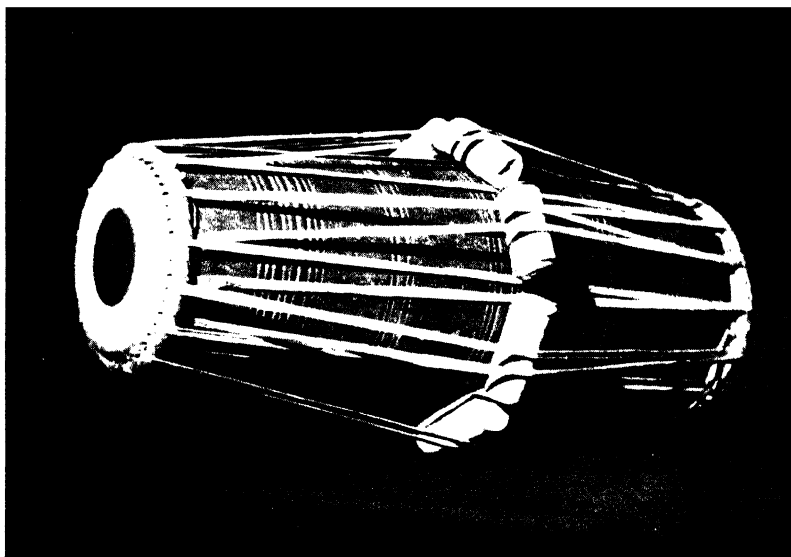


SHEHNAI



BANSARI OR FLUTE





PAKHAWAJ OF MRIDANG

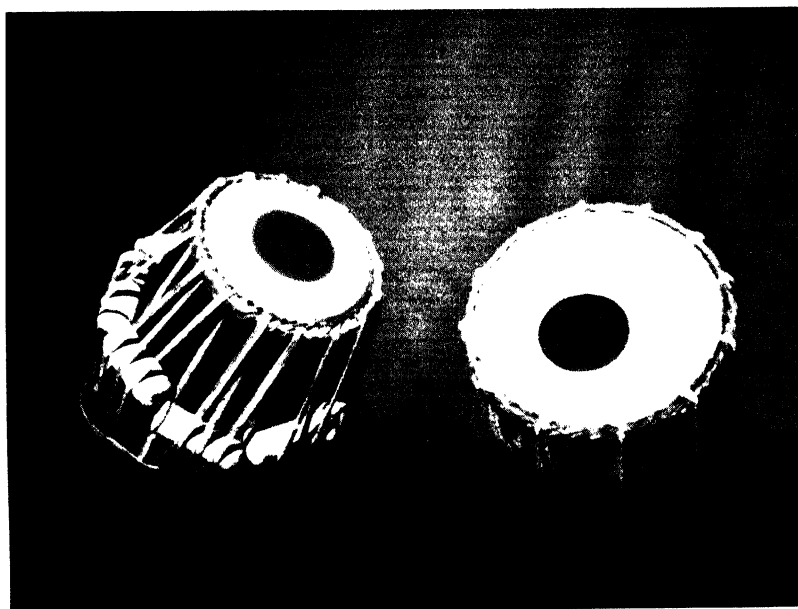
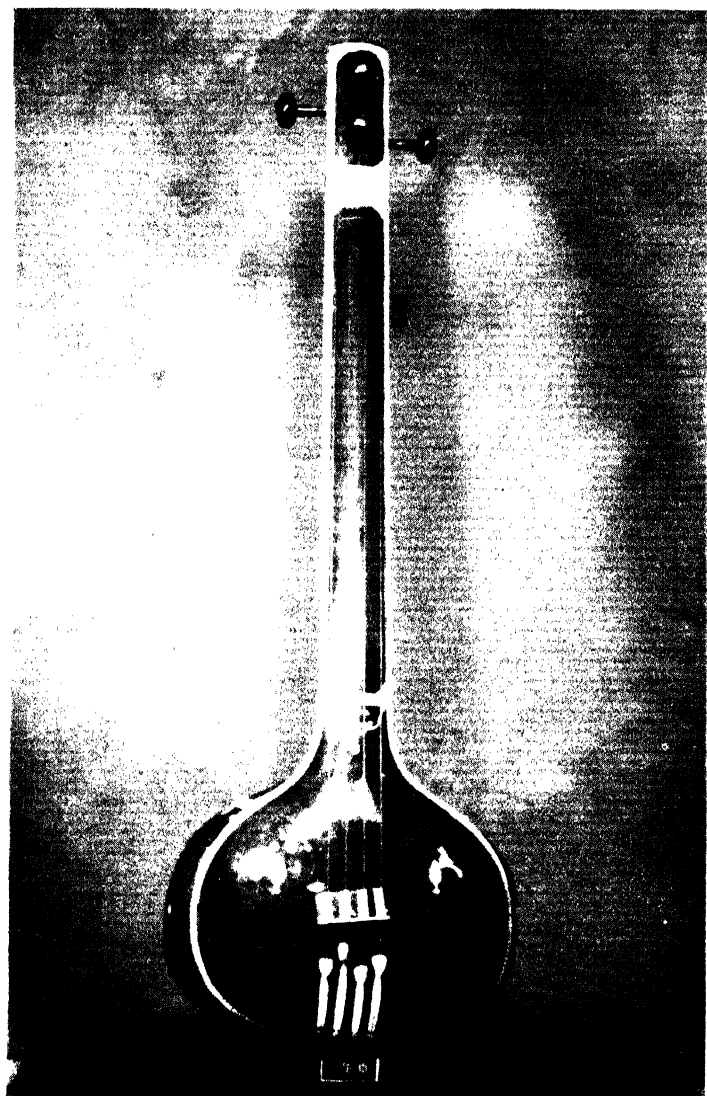


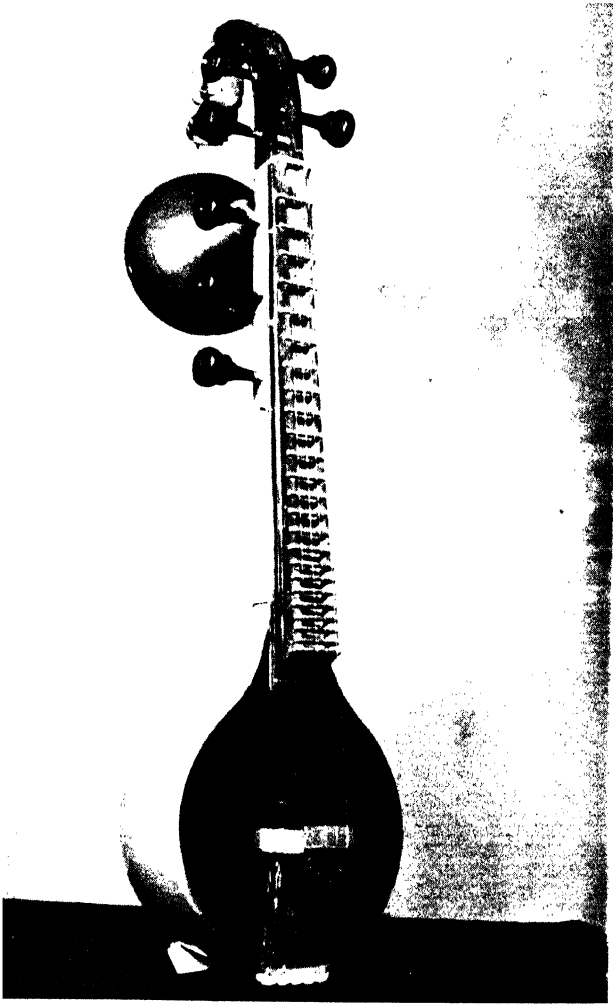
TABLA-BAYAN



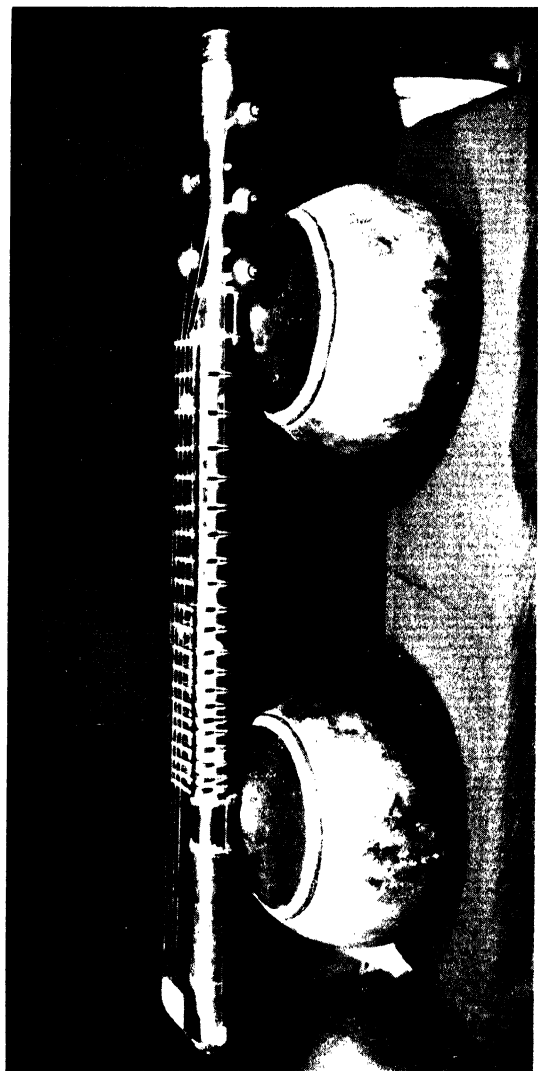
SOUTH INDIAN TAMBURA



NORTH INDIAN TAMBURA



SARASWATI VEENA



NORTH INDIAN VEENA



SAROD

*Laratgheth* is the cross rhythm generated by the artist and percussion player when in competition each tries to beat the other with the show of *Ghat* and *Anaghat*.

*Larguthab* is a variation of *Ladi*.

*Guthi* is the weaving of *Bols* in different rhythmical patterns.

*Jhar* is the stress given on a series of *Bols*.

*Halka* is contrary to *Jhar* and is rather the marked softness of some particular *Bols*.

These rhythms and cross rhythms are necessary 'as they are not prototypes of musical structures for all artists but a projection of them from one domain of sense to another, a symbolic transformation.'

There are five styles of tabla playing with which we shall deal in a later chapter.

In principle, the *talas* of Carnatic music are the same as those of the North Indian music. *Talas* used in Carnatic music number seven, each having five *Jatis* or varieties. The *Jatis* are named after the number of *Aksharas* they contain in their principal beat, viz. *Tisra* for three, *Chatusra* for four, *Khanda* for five and *Misra* for seven and *Sankirna* for nine. The *Talas* in the Carnatic system are arranged in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Name	<i>Chatusra</i>	<i>Tisra</i>	<i>Misra</i>	<i>Khanda</i>	<i>Sankirna</i>
<i>Ektala</i>	4	3	7	5	9
<i>Rupaka</i>	2.4	2.3	2.7	2.5	2.9
<i>Jhampa</i>	4.1.2	3.1.2	7.1.2	5.1.2	9.1.2
<i>Triputa</i>	4.1.2	3.1.2	7.1.2	5.1.2	9.1.2
<i>Mathya</i>	4.2.4	3.2.3	7.2.7	5.2.5	9.2.9
<i>Dhruva</i>	4.2.4.4	3.2.3.3	7.2.7.7	5.2.5.5	9.2.9.9
<i>Ata</i>	4.4.2.2	3.3.2.2	7.7.2.2	5.5.2.2	9.9.2.2

From the above it can be seen that the Carnatic *Talas* are not arranged in the order of numbers in the principal beat but in the usual method followed in the North.

It will be found that in the *Eka Tala* there is only one *Anga* in each division, in *Rupaka* two, in *Jhampa*, *Tripata* and *Mathya* three each.

In North Indian music *Talas* are arranged a little differently. In the northern variety of *Eka Tala*, only *Chatusra* is used. In *Rupaka Chatusra* (2.4) and *Tisra* (2.3) varieties are found. *Jhampa* of the North runs 2.3.2.3, which according to the South will be a double *Rupaka*. North uses only the *Chatusra* variety of *Tripata* known as *Tritala*. *Mathya* of the *Chatusra* variety is known as *Ada Choutal*, having two forms 4.2.4.4 and 2.4.4.4. *Ata tala* is used in the north in two varieties, viz., *Choutala* (4.4.2.2) and *Dhamar* (5.5.4). Carnatic *Tripata* is similar to *Tevra* of Hindustani music.

In principle and practice the drumming in Carnatic music is the same, only the *Bols* varying a little as they vary in the North too from guild to guild. The Carnatic drumming *Bols* are:

*Ta*: Left hand with four fingers.

*Ti*: Right hand with four fingers on the middle of the drum.

*Nam*: By left hand with all fingers.

*Tom*: By both hands with all fingers.

*Tadimi*: *Ta* + *Di* + *Mi*.

*Ta*: By the first finger of the right hand on the edge of the drum.

*Di*: By the left middle finger.

*Mi*: By the right middle finger on the middle of the drum.

*Tam*: By both hands simultaneously.

*Takitta*: *Ta* + *Kit* + *Ta*.

*Tamkitta*: *Tam* + *Kit* + *Ta*.

*Namkitta*: *Nam* + *Kit* + *Ta*.

*Ta*: By left hand with all fingers and right hand four fingers on the border.

*Kit*: By right hand middle finger.

*Ta*: By right hand forefinger on the border.

*Ti*: By left forefinger.

*Ton*: By both hands with all fingers.



*Nam*: As *ton*.

*Talangu*: *Ta* + *Lan* + *Gu*.

*Ta*: By left hand.

*Lam*: By left hand, second finger on the border.

*Gu*: By the middle finger.

*Tom*: By both hands with all fingers.

*Tay*: As *Ton*.

*Tali*, or clap in the Carnatic *Tals*, is on the first *Matra* of each section (*Bibhag*) of a *Tala*. Instead of wave of hand (*Khali*) the Carnatic musicians use the word *Visharjitam* (left out) which denotes a different meaning. *Visharjitam* actually is the means with which to count the middle time units of a *Bibhag* or show them sometimes by raising the hand towards the left (*Krishya Visharjitam*) and sometimes towards the right (*Sarpini Visharjitam*).

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## 18. Alap or the Content, and Bandish or the Form

SCHLEGEL has described architecture as 'frozen music'. This is an apt description—so apt, indeed, that the reverse is also true. We can, therefore, call music fluid architecture. The two arts are alike, both of them have shape and design, but with this difference that the architectural design is seen all at once while the design in music unfolds very slowly before the listener. The one takes place in space and the other in time. One finds its way to the mind and heart through the eye and the other through the ear. Every musical composition is built around the central theme or subject accompanied by other lesser themes. Its design grows as the composer or artist elaborates the themes or develops them through repetition, variation and contrast.

Music in India is the unfolding of the melody, which is the bare idea in the beginning, and the rhythmic presentation of the subject-matter, or burden of the song, as art is 'an attempt to create a pleasing or significant form'.<sup>1</sup> What then is this form in music? It is the contemplation of an experience leading to its expression and representation in tonal warps and woofs, harmonized in themselves, and forming a fine design with a feeling of purpose.

North Indian music has developed in these two ways: melodically and rhythmically. Therefore every real artiste gives proofs of his creative ability on these two lines. The first of these is the *Alapa* or content in which the music is

developed melodically, also known as *Nayaki*.

Music, besides being one's self-expression, is also formulation and representation of one's moods, mental tensions and resolutions—'a logical picture of sentient responsive life, a source of insight. So, in the beginning, instead of concerning itself much with words and their meanings, it aims at representing something which involves the conception of two distinct things, one of which be given, by a specific act leading to the finalisation of the idea in a pure design.'<sup>2</sup>

To achieve this the artiste in India concentrates on the bare *Raga* idea (*Aroha-Avaroha*) and finds out a method by which the mental image of the *Raga* could be obtained, sustained and given form. It is worthwhile to remember here that in music the line of demarcation between form and content is very thin and they often overlap, which makes music an art from the very beginning.

*Alapa* is a simple musical progression advancing rhythmically. In this we find the artiste rambling, struggling and striving to give expression to the idea or content as the 'vital characteristic of pure art in the beginning is the expression of thought and not the exposition of form'.<sup>3</sup>

Everything here depends on skill in the manipulation of the voice and play of imagination. Here vocal and instrumental music become almost one and the same, the only difference being the use of the human voice which adds deeper meanings to the simple vowels used in the imitation of the sound of the stringed instrument, veena. In this part the melody is self-moving, neither bound by any limitation nor moulded in any pattern but having a design of geometrical perfection.

The presentation of the melody rhythmically is known as *Gayaki*.

Even in veena and other stringed instruments these two parts are played—firstly as *Alapa* which is begun in a slow tempo, then increased to medium, followed by the fast one unaccompanied by any percussion instrument; then comes the second part, the rhythmical development played fast, always accompanied by the mridanga or tabla.

In the *Alapa* no words are used to facilitate movement of

the melody. This makes it music in pure state, cleansed of all earthly dross, since all that it uses are a few meaningless musical sounds which act only as props. The *Bandish*, i.e. the rhythmical presentation of the melody, contains, on the other hand, words which have definite meanings. In the former, the development of the melody is not merely a translation of the spirit of the composition but is something more. But in the latter the temper or mood of the composition holds the key to the development and supplies it with structural designs.

And instinct must work to give unity to the elements of design as all work of art should have an inherent unity which is the result of a conception of expression as activity. Activity here indicates a 'fusion of the various and multiple impressions in one', giving an organic wholeness to the element of design which, when completed, is called form.

Though the words of the compositions are mere pegs on which to hang the tune, yet they should be pronounced as clearly as possible. A melody in Indian music has several compositions each having its own peculiar structural symmetry. An artiste who tries to express the beauty of a song meant for a particular melody by a touch of his personal genius, neglecting its compositional structure, may astound the ordinary listeners, but he would fail to satisfy his compeers. The subject-matter of a song has its own emotional value which can be recognised only in the compositions. Except a handful of *Alapa* singers, all recognise that neither mere words nor *Alapa* alone can be the glory of music, as the *Rasa* or aesthetic appeal is created by the harmonious blending of both word and melody.

It is therefore the endeavour of every true artist to interweave both the *Nayaki* and the *Gayaki* skilfully so as to present music as one single form. 'This principle of balance by which the several parts of the song stand out from one another in strong contrast and yet help, each in its own way, to build up a general sense of unity—that ordered disposition of its component parts by which music travels to an inevitable climax, neither postponing nor anticipating it, and thence to a close—that variety which gives flesh and blood to the bare

bones of structure—all this is form.<sup>14</sup>

‘The primal unity of the Indian system is the tonic note or drone; and the sense of contrast is supplied by the dominant, in which the lie of the song, its *tessitura* centres, and the notes which are related to this as consonants (*Samvadi*) and the passage notes (*Anuvadi* or *Vivadi*) between the consonants. But whereas the dominant is implied in the tonic, it stands out against the drone (*Kharaja*) as a matter of choice, and so makes for the contrast, and yet the varying relationship (in different *Ragas*) of the dominant to the drone, its relative distance from it, is what gives its special character to the song. This very contrast may be said also to impart unity, the unity, namely, of a particular *Raga*, and thus the general unity of the song proceeds not from intrinsic necessity, but from freedom of choice.’<sup>15</sup>

In the present day, following a reaction from all types of art which are busy with the problem of representation, we lay too much emphasis on the design. Design is, no doubt, of paramount importance; but yet there is a danger in the pursuit of a too conscious design, for when too much attention is concentrated on this there is bound to be a loss of depth. The primary objective of all ancient Indian art was to render the significance of the subject. In the achievement of this objective the artiste’s intuitive faculty and experience work for the disposition of the constituents and the synthesis of their regrouping. Thus the design is not perceptible on the surface but works as a force from within. The artists of old did not make any hard and fast distinction between a conscious and subconscious effort, as each artist knew well how subtly and inextricably these two are interrelated and intertwined.

So the first requisite of a song is the establishment of this relationship between the dominant and the *Kharaj*. *Alapa* establishes such a relationship. It has no rhythmic accompaniment as it has no regularity of space but there is a material scheme having only regular punctuations. Like the sentence it has its full stop known as *Sam*. Only words like *Nom*, *Tom*, *Re*, *Na*, *Tan* which have no meaning but are only pure vowels meant to help the movement of the melody are used. It is an

endless adventure yet full of purpose and is spontaneous. 'The work consists of elaborate graces, calculated to make the most of the important notes of the *Raga*; and in order that these may be given with due impressiveness the *Alapa* is always sung at a slow and moderate pace. The grace thus used to put the important notes in inverted commas is called *Murchana*. It is obvious that the *Alapa* is a real necessity both for the performer and the listener', as it assists both to enter into the spirit of the *Raga* 'without which they would spend their time for some part of the *Raga* in ignorance of its tonal centres and the melody thus would be for them an aimless running up and down the hill.' The object of *Alapa* is thus not only the establishment of the *Raga* but is something beyond the use of notes which, while behaving according to the strict *Raga* canon of behaviour yet have their moods and figurations elaborated, thus expanding and intensifying the vision—the vision of the *Raga*. It is in a sense the contemplative part of Indian music.

*Alapa* is thus fundamental in Indian music. Its principal function is to reveal the *Raga*, the fulfilment of which can only be found in the unity amidst diversity. Mere revelation of the grandeur of a *Raga* can never be the aim of any artiste. The unity is inherent in the composition as it is predetermined by the composer. The artiste has to find it out and give expression to it and when correctly rendered it becomes his own creation. To achieve this he needs a special talent. The ground is smooth in *Alapa* and the singer finds no limitations imposed by words. In the singing of the *Bandish* the ability to work up gradual development can be acquired only by a good deal of experience backed by a thorough knowledge of the intricacies of the *Raga*. *Alapa* is India's music, pure and abstract. A query may be made whether *Alapa* is superior to the song or vice versa. The answer to this question really depends on the genius of the exponent and the taste of the listener. But ontologically *Alapa* has to be given preference. *Alapa* is an improvisation of the *Raga* theme. In the *Alapa* it is not possible to shape the *Raga* wholly—because in it the singer moves forward while shaping the *Raga* according to

his own individual touch, taste and feeling on the basic structure of the *Raga*. Only revelation is the aim of *Alapa*. It cannot be limited by any form; nor should one attempt it. Once it is attempted it becomes the song or the instrumental score. There is nothing like stopping in *Alapa*—it is the dynamic movement of the *Raga*.

This is one side of the *Raga*. The other facet is to express it in a song—that is to limit it within a form. Because the two facets were demarcated, the old masters arranged *Dhrupad* songs without any decoration. They had put all decorative devices or elements if there were any, in the *Alapa* itself. And that is why they started *Dhrupad* singing with *Alapa* and the man who could not do it had no place among the master singers. The core of the *Alapa* is an emotional theme like the subject of an essay and this theme is identified with a musical phrase and is repeated at frequent intervals. The central theme of the musical composition, on the contrary, is a mechanical rhythmic scheme to which the musician returns very often after creating varieties in the rhythmic interpretations. The musical composition is said to have an intellectual appeal while *Alapa* is an emotional theme, though they very often overlap.

In the *Bandish*, modes find expression in tune and words, or rather the design. It is the bedrock of musical form and the use of words restricts its speed. In short, if *Alapa* is revelation of the *Raga*, *Bandish* is its exhibition.

Expression of sentiment through the creation of a multi-coloured texture is another aim of Indian music. This has to be achieved by maintaining at the same time the purity of the *Raga*.

Much stress has been laid on correct intonation in Indian music as each *Raga* is set in a particular mould and no sudden change in the vocal pitch is allowed. A feature of Indian music which is confusing to the Western ear is the constant use of *Portamento*. Here 'it is far more the interval than the note that is sung or played, and we recognise accordingly a continuity of tone: by contrast with this, the European song, which is vertically divided by harmonic interest, and the

nature of the keyed instruments which is heard with the voice, seem to the unaccustomed Indian ears to be full of holes.' In Indian music the passage from one note to the other is not made abruptly but as smoothly as possible and it is the general practice of the artiste to return to either C or F, whenever possible while singing, so as to enable him to compare his voice with the fundamental. Though breathing exercises on the Western model are not prescribed by musicians in India yet the vocalisation of *Alapa* helps the students of music to regulate their breath and intone properly.

*Alapa* is also necessary for the purpose of voice training. In this process, only the approved and the prescribed vowels are used. The deepest and the most resonant vowel A (as in Ah!) with the only consonants N, M and T is employed. The fundamental vowel A is the most magnificent sound that the larynx can produce. By its fullness, clarity and richness it is best calculated to stir a person to his very depths. Next comes E, another important vowel from the point of view of sound. No consonant serves better than T soft, for commencing or terminating a composition. The liquid sounds N and M furnish an easy transition from the vowel to the consonant. When all these vowels are properly arranged, it sounds like *Ananta Ari* (*Hari*) *Narayan*, i.e. the God Infinite.

*Alapa* is always begun in slow tempo, gradually changed to the medium, and terminated in the fast tempo. In the beginning it is very short and gradually or rather very slowly it lengthens itself resolving itself every time on the tonic. Ancient Indian texts have given clear indications of how *Alapa* is to be sung. 'It is to be begun on the tonic note of the middle register improvised down to the tonic of the lower Octave and again go upwards and end where it was begun.'

*Alapa* is generally sung in four sections, very similar to a normal Sonata or symphony having four contrasted movements viz. *Sthayee*, *Antra*, *Sanchari* and *Abhog*. In the *Sthayee*, as we have seen, only the outline of the melody is sketched in the ascent and descent and the prominent notes of the *Raga* are repeated again and again. In between such repetitions the neighbouring note just below each of them casts its shadow,



which becomes clearly perceptible when the tonic or octave is touched. The actual principle involved here is to establish the voice on the tonic and then to pass to the second, third and other subsequent notes slowly while giving the important notes of the *Raga* prominence both in magnitude and time. The notes here are attacked individually one by one and the *Raga* proceeds upto G of the middle octave and sometimes even upto the leading note after which the C of the third register is touched and descent is made to the C of the middle register, not always along the same steps. Like the second movement of the Sonata or symphony it is usually patterned on broad, simple lines permitting the listener to understand the melody. Its tempo is slow, and its mood is apt to be peaceful, seraphic, romantic or meditative. Here is tested the singer's ability to produce the outline of the melody which appears to be formless yet bound together into a unified satisfying whole. It is a challenge to the listener's intellect as well as to the artist's skill at musical craftsmanship.

*Antara* is to Indian music what cantilena is to the western melody. In this, the notes of the middle register, and specially the notes from its second tetrachord are freely used and the musical phrases or cluster of notes which individualise the *Raga* are for the first time brought into use. Gradually the notes of the higher register are touched and it may not often be within half an hour or even a little more that the voice reaches the fifth or the higher note in the ascent if possible and their return is made to the fundamental. Here the listener is given an opportunity to release his mental vigilance and allow himself to be carried away by the waves of lyric melody.

Then comes the *Sanchari* which means 'roaming,' and is a mixture of the *Sthayee* and the *Antara*. It begins usually on one of the bass notes of the second tetrachord and then the notes of the higher registers are touched with all the coyness and cunning of a courting bird. In the early part of it *Gamaka* is used. Hence the voice gradually acquires the volume and the deep notes of bass which come from the abdomen, creating a sense of majesty and wonder. The voice *Gamaka*

generally expresses seriousness. *Meend*, too, is used here frequently and this section is always sung in higher notes. It is ended on the fifth or the tonic of the second register. Like the third movement or, as it is sometimes called, Dance movement of the Sonata or symphony, it is usually the lightest and simplest of the four and often the fastest and merriest.

Last comes *Abhog*. The tonal movement here is something similar to *Sanchari*, with the difference that the notes of all the three registers are used here—which gives the melody a very distinct colour. As the *Antara* portion is always sung with notes of the higher register, it is the general practice of the artiste not to continue this for long for two reasons. First, the notes being higher in pitch strain the voice, and secondly, if continued for a somewhat long period they become mere repetition of the improvisation of the lower octave and thus run the risk of becoming monotonous. The *Alapa* of any *Raga* having the dominant from the first tetra-chord is generally extended to the other notes constituting the *Raga* and, after covering every note, the return is made to the fundamental and ended on the phrase known as *Sam* or stop of the *Alapa*. The voice here acquires speed and we find the singer imitating the sound of veena on the background of the larger rhythm as by this alone full justice can be done to *Alapa*. It is like the fourth movement of symphony or Sonata, often called the finale. This is a little more elaborate and imposing than the two middle movements, though not quite as complex as the opening movement. Since its purpose is to bring the composition to an effective close, it attempts to keep the listener on the edge of his seat. It may resound with triumphant nobility or bubble over with sparkling high spirits, or sweep us irresistibly along with the precipitate rhythms. The whole effort is to be brilliant, rousing and climactic. It should be remembered that by merely showing the ascent, descent, dominant, sub-dominant and special phrases of the *Raga*, *Alapa* is not completed. The artiste has also to reveal the inner core of the *Raga* and for this he needs an understanding of the spirit of the *Raga* as well as its outer form. *Alapa* has a beginning, so to speak, but no end. It is of the

nature of an endless procession. Thus it is not revelation but a process of infinite revealing. It has, no doubt, its root in the finite but it always seeks the infinite. In its long journey it comes across many *Ragas* of similar construction and nature of *Ragas* which are ready to intercept its progress or impress themselves on it. The artiste has to navigate his *Raga* through all these currents and cross currents without being caught up in these. It is not enough to reveal what the *Raga* is at its best but the artiste has to reveal what it is not. At the beginning, *Alapa* is sung in a very slow tempo with frequent use of *Gamaka* and *Meend* and no variations (*Tana*) are allowed at this stage. In the next stage when it is sung in medium tempo, small variations mixed with *Meend* are used sparingly along with *Chut*, *Murchana*, but with moderation. It then passes on to a fast tempo at the end of which rhythmic variations are introduced and the percussion instrument accompanies it.

What are *Meend*, *Gamak*, *Murchana* and *Chut*? Are they mere ornaments and decorations? To the ordinary people they are. But to one who goes deeper they are something more. It is well known that in the process of formulation and representation of emotions which is also the work of *Alapa*, certain musical phrases come into being, which 'resemble certain dynamic patterns of human experience.' Even the psychologists admit the 'usefulness of these musical dynamics to describe the mental life' as 'the inner processes whether emotional or intellectual, show types of development which may be given names usually applied to musical events,' such as *Gamak*, *Meend*, *Murchana*, *Chut*, etc.

After *Alapa*, the musical composition or song known as *Cheez* is begun. The passage from the *Alapa* to the musical composition is made with some combination of notes appropriate to the *Raga* known as *Jodcha* or link.

A musical composition has four parts in *Dhrupad* similar to *Alapa* or two parts in *Kheyals*. *Kheyals* too follow the ground plan of the normal Sonata form of the Western music: first comes the introduction *ad libitum*—a preliminary section in slow tempo which is not an integral part of the form but

merely a measure of 'warming up', intended to arouse an anticipatory interest in the melody itself. Its purpose is to create the mood. Sometimes the introductory section contains a suggestion of the significant features of the melody. One can generally tell when the introduction will be over by the quickening of its pace. Introductions of this sort are not essential to *Kheyals*. The great majority of the *Kheyals* skip these preliminaries and go straight to the principal sections in the following sequence.

1. Exposition—This is establishment of the musical idea or content briefly.

2. *Sthayee*—This is the first theme often called the principal theme or principal subject. It is mostly a short simple melody.

3. *Antara*—This is the second theme, which unlike the principal theme, is usually a broad, melodious tune. The effect that is usually aimed in this is one of contrast with the first part and the mood of this portion therefore depends on the character of the first section.

4. *Vistara* or improvisation—This is the development section, sometimes called the elaboration or free fantasy. It is the weaving together of pitch and beat within the well defined frame work of the *Raga*. The brilliancy of the improvisation is the glory of Indian music which can only be achieved by sheer virtuosity in spite of the restricting rules of the *Raga*. This phase offers the artist free scope to make a new approach to the formal aspect of art or pure design.

In improvisation or *Vistara* of Indian music we find this aspect of pure design at its great height where it not only does not exhibit pure form as in *Alapa* as a mere embellishment but as its very essence. Here the meaning of music apart from what it ostensibly is belongs to the realm of sensuous percept.

In the hands of an imaginative singer the latter part becomes a fascinating maze. Fragments of the kindred melodies are often introduced to the listener, tossed about, combined and transformed into the melody sung. The brief and distinctive theme chosen is however always painted through its manifold

veils—the artiste only has to elaborate the contours, embellish the ornaments, play hide and seek with the beauties of the *Raga*, thus casting a spell on the listener. In his fanciful roaming the artist often wanders away from the realm of the chosen *Raga* but invariably returns home once in a while and thus maintains an inner unity.

The art of improvisation was a part of Western music, too, from the time of the great masters such as Bach, Handel, Beethoven to the time of the great Liszt who were all famous for their improvisation. But it is now all mere memory and the only correspondence with musical activity current in the West today is the improvisation of Jazz, with the difference that in it the improvisation develops along certain chord sequences—which in India confines itself to melodic line only: variation of rhythm, of course, are common to both.

#### 5. *Abhog*—This is the finale.

Many of the Indian *Ragas* are very similar in structure and in nature and they are known as *Samaprakritik Ragas* or *Ragas* having common characteristics. While singing these *Ragas* one has to take great care so that the other *Ragas* of kindred nature do not gain ascendancy. In order to individualise such *Ragas* and to counteract the influence of kindred ones the artiste has to constantly harp on the 'special phrase' of the *Raga* known as *pakad*, that is 'the catch' which consists of a minimum collection of notes that particularise a *Raga*.

As the *Asthayee* portion is generally sung in the low and middle octave most of the improvisation also continues here as any longer improvisation in the higher octave is impossible. The ancient musical texts have given a clear indication as to how a *Raga* should be sung. 'The development of the *Raga* should begin on the notes between the low and the middle octave and in respect of variations notes from the higher octave should be used and the process should end on the fundamental of the middle octave.' The *Ragas* of the *Uttaranga* class use more of the higher octave notes in the improvisation.

In the *Bandish*, or the rhythmical presentation, it is necessary to preserve the symmetry of the composition when developed along the rhythm. For this reason it may be called

the lyrical part of the Indian music.

The *Kheyals* are sung in slow and fast measures. The chief characteristic of *Kheyal* is its use of many embellishments and *Tanas* (melodic figure) which can be called the whimsical part of Indian music which, besides adding variety to it, has a haunting beauty of its own.

Like Rondo of Western music Indian music is always concluded either with the first strain or on the first bar or if not at least on the first note of the bar. A bar or a measure or a certain number of measures are very frequently repeated with slight variations almost without end. Indian time allows such liberty to pauses which may be lengthened at will provided it does not disturb the time.

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## 19. Carnatic Music

TILL NOW we have been discussing the musical details of the system prevalent in the northern part of India. Now, for a moment, let us turn to the other style of music known as Carnatic which is current in the southern part of the country and has a more ancient continuous history. It has a common origin and tradition with the northern music and differs from it only in details though in their fundamentals they are very near to each other.

The earliest text on this type of music which is extant is *Silappadikaran* written about the fourth century A.D. by Ilangovalikal, a Chera prince. The book mentions a number of musical instruments prevalent at that time such as the veena, the drum etc. and explains musical notes then current, their constituent notes, scales and *Ragas*. We find the musical scale divided into nearly twelve equal parts which later must have influenced South Indian music to some extent.

The melody tradition as embodied in the *Silappadikaran* has been preserved in the *Phanns* still current in the Tamil part of the country. They are the melody blocks similar to the *Arohi-Avrohi* of the *Ragas* of northern India. They are called *Phanns* because they are rendered through the medium of eight bodily parts including the tongue, nose, lips and teeth and by eight *Kriyas* (actions)—*Edutal* (lifting), *Padutal* (lying down), *Nalidal* (squeezing), *Kampitam* (shaking), *Kuttilam* (crooked), *Oli* (proper production of the voice), *Uruth* (twist) and *Takku* (correct pronunciation)—which in the present day mean *Sthayas* and *Gamakas*. It is rather surprising

that all these constitute the very fundamentals of the *Alapa* of Carnatic music even today.

The Tamil system also specifies that the *Alapti* (Tamil *Alathi*) should be rendered by the syllables *Tena*, *Tena* which were later incorporated in Aryan music. Moreover, many of the ancient *Phanms* such as *Hindolam*, *Megham*, etc. were incorporated in Aryan music of a later period.

The development of Tamil music can be divided into two distinct periods—the Sangam period lasting up to 50 B.C. and the Thevra period beginning from 50 B. C. and ending in A. D. 1800. Though nothing is known definitely about the music of this period, yet from the few references found here and there, it can be presumed that the music of the Thevran with complex rhythms and melody set a very high standard for the future music of South India.

We find South Indian music unconsciously incorporating in itself many of the regional trends and variations in vogue from the very early times. Finding some current musical compositions somewhat different from general music Someswara Bhullokamal, ruler of a part of the Deccan from A. D. 1116 to 1127 and author of *Manosallasam*, a thesaurus of many arts and hobbies, qualified the southern music with the adjective Carnatic. This word later came to be used to distinguish between the two styles of music prevalent in the two parts of India.

The music of the South had already started to assert itself differently from the main current of Aryan music long before the Muslim invasion began to influence her North Indian sister. It seems that long before the thirteenth century it had established itself as a somewhat distinct trend due to its getting mixed up with the regional musical varieties of the South. This can easily be realised from the following verses of *Hamsa Sandesham*, a poetic work written by one Vedanta Desika, in which the hero addresses the swan-messenger thus: "Thou shalt admire the love-disturbed simplicity of the corn guarding girls, seated on the beds of tender leaves under the shade of sugarcane plants, with their hearts gladdened by enchanting conversations and feeling ecstasy over the peculiar songs



complicated by the mixture of Tamil and Telugu music probably.'

A more or less definite bifurcation of the two distinct systems took place during the time of Vidyaranya of Vijayanagar (A. D. 1302-1387) who, for the first time, made an attempt to codify the *Ragas* on a *Mela-Janya* basis. Even then, without well-developed rules this continued to be in a nebulous state for some time. It was left to one Purandara Das (A.D. 1448-1564), a mendicant and versatile composer, to lend an individuality to the music of the South with his compositions and interpretations of the *Ragas*.

However, the first book of real importance which made this trend permanent is *Swaramelakalanidhi* written by Ramamatya of Vijayanagar in A.D. 1550. While accepting the *Shuddha* scale of Sarangadeva's *Sangeeta Ratnakara* he questioned the validity of his *Vikrit* or modified note. He also substituted Ratnakara's intervals of *Rishava* (*D*) and *Dhaivata* (*A*) by *Pancha* and *Shashta Shruti* intervals which are not found in any other book before his time. So, if he had not invented them, he must have found them current in the music of the region where he lived. The influence of these twelve divisions in the scale and the music of *Nayanars* and *Alvars* (Vaishnavite and Saivite saints, respectively, of South India) have gone a long way to determine the character of the present Carnatic music. Besides the above notes and *Shruti* division Ramamatya introduced for the first time the *Mela-karta* (genus-species) system of classification on a scientific basis and added a new chapter on the *Melas*, which all other succeeding authors have followed and elaborated, thus driving deeper the wedge that separated South Indian music from the North Indian.

The next book of importance on Carnatic music is Pandit Somanath's *Ragavivodha* (c. 1609) which he wrote 'only to reconcile the conflict between the science and the art of music.' He follows the time-honoured 22 *Shrutis* and describes seven *Shuddha* and seven *Vikrita* notes. The book is of a very high order and it drew the attention of Northern authorities such as Ahobala and Bhava Bhatta both of whom

have quoted him. His best achievement was to popularise the views of Ramamatya. 'If Ramamatya was the thought-thrower in the music world, Somanath must be deemed to be the discussor, agitator and broadcaster—all rolled into one. Hence Ramamatya and Somanath must be deemed to be equally important factors or agents in the matter of effectually affecting music reform—the one by originating, and the other by propagating the musical views of the sixteenth century A. D.'

Later the labour of Venkatamukhi (sixteenth century), a scholar of repute, made this distinction more pronounced. He established a system of procedures and rules based on the careful study of frequencies and sounds and classified *Ragas* in *Melakartas* (parents) and *Janya* (derivatives) with a scientific exactitude. It was he who based Carnatic music on a firm ground, introducing *Sarab*, *Jandi*, *Alankaram*, *Geetham* and *Varnam*. He was the creator of this distinct style and many of the music forms now prevalent in the South are traceable to him.

Before the Muslim influence coloured the music of the North the difference between the two systems was perhaps not much. Even today South Indian music uses the same number of notes of the same nomenclature with an equal number of *Shrutis* distributed amongst them, though they are not so clearly marked as in the North. Venkatamukhi does not recognise more than twelve notes in theory but when one listens carefully to Carnatic music one finds that in certain *Ragas* some notes are sharper or flatter than in others. A comparative chart of South Indian and North Indian notes is as given in Table 4.

Thus, though the scale in use in the North adopted slight modifications of the standard notes, making them more colourful than the austere ones which continue in Carnatic music, yet this bifurcation did not mean any basic change in the character of the system.

In the South the *Ragas* are grouped under two heads, viz., *Janaka* (generic) and *Janya* (generated) or the genus-species system. Other terms used for the *Janaka Raga* are *Melkertas*, *Mela*, *Karta* and *Sampurna Ragas*. Likewise the *Janya Ragas*,

too, have many synonyms. The *Janaka Ragas* possess the full complement of seven notes both in ascent and descent and are seventy-two in number. *Janya Ragas* are those which are derived from *Janaka Ragas* and take the same notes as those of the parent *Raga* but are fewer in number. It is, however, not uncommon for the *Janya Ragas* to use one or two foreign notes which may not be found in the parent *Raga*.

TABLE 4

Hindustani	Carnatic
1. <i>Shadja</i>	<i>Shadja</i>
2. <i>Komal Rishabh</i>	<i>Shuddha Rishabh</i>
3. <i>Tivra Rishabh</i>	<i>Chatushruti Rishabh</i> or <i>Shuddha Gandhara</i>
4. <i>Komal Gandhar</i>	<i>Shatshruti Rishabh</i>
5. <i>Tivra Gandhar</i>	<i>Antara Gandhar</i>
6. <i>Komal Madhyam</i>	<i>Shuddha Madhyam</i>
7. <i>Tivra Madhyam</i>	<i>Prati Madhyam</i>
8. <i>Pancham</i>	<i>Pancham</i>
9. <i>Komal Dhaivat</i>	<i>Shuddha Dhaivat</i>
10. <i>Tivra Dhaivat</i>	<i>Chatushruti Dhaivat</i> or <i>Shuddha Nishad</i>
11. <i>Komal Nishad</i>	<i>Shatshruti Dhaivat</i> or <i>Kaisik Nishad</i>
12. <i>Tivra Nishad</i>	<i>Kakali Nishad</i>

The *Janaka Ragas* are arranged according to a definite plan which helps us to name the notes used by them without any difficulty. In the first 36 of these *Ragas* the *Shuddha Madhyama*, or the unmodified fourth note, is used and in the second group of 36, it is substituted by the accentuated one, leaving the rest of the notes as they are. The first group of *Ragas* are known as *Purva Melakartas* and the latter *Uttara Melakartas*. We find that every *Melakarta* having an unmodi-

fied fourth note has its corresponding note in the fourth accentuated variety.

These 72 parent modes are grouped under 12 species, each containing six derived *Ragas*. Each group is known as *Chakra*. In the first six *Chakras* the unmodified fourth note is constant and in the second six *Chakras* the fourth is an accentuated note. The notes *C* and *G* are always present in all the 72 parent *Ragas*.

Within each *Chakra*, the initial and the terminal notes, i.e. the *Purvanga* and *Uttaranga*, remain unchanged. Again, within a *Chakra* the *Purvanga* notes remain as they are; i.e. *D* and *E* retain their identical character in all the six *Mela Ragas* within the group, the change occurring only in *A* and *B*.

The first group of *Mela Ragas* take Flat *A* and unmodified *B*.

The second group of *Mela Ragas* take the Flat *B*.

The third group of *Mela Ragas* take the Sharp *B*.

The fourth group of *Mela Ragas* take the unmodified *A* and Flat *B*.

The fifth group of *Mela Ragas* take the Sharp *B*.

The sixth group of *Mela Ragas* take the Flat *B*, Sharp *B*.

The *D—E* varieties also occur in the above order, with the exception that, instead of changing from *Mela* to *Mela*, they change from *Chakra* to *Chakra*.

The first *Chakra* takes the Flat *D* and the unmodified *E*.

The second *Chakra* takes the Flat *D* and the Flat *E*.

The third *Chakra* takes the Flat *D* and the unmodified *D*.

The fourth *Chakra* takes the unmodified *D* and the Flat *E*.

The fifth *Chakra* takes the unmodified *E*.

The sixth *Chakra* takes the Flat *E* and the unmodified *E*.

The above six combinations are repeated in the same order in the other half, i.e. the *Chakras* 7—12.

The characteristic features of the *Janaka Ragas* are:

- (1) Use of the full complement of seven notes, both in ascent and descent.
- (2) Regularity in ascent and descent.
- (3) Homogeneous character of the notes used.

*Janya Ragas* are divided into two groups: *Varja Ragas*, and *Vakra Ragas*.

The first set of *Ragas* omit one or two notes either in the ascent or in descent or in both. They are classified under eight heads according to the number of the notes they take in the ascent and descent as under.

(1) <i>Sexta</i>	<i>Septa</i> tonic
(2) <i>Penta</i>	<i>Septa</i> tonic
(3) <i>Septa</i>	<i>Sexta</i> tonic
(4) <i>Sexta</i>	<i>Sexta</i> tonic
(5) <i>Sexta</i>	<i>Penta</i> tonic
(6) <i>Penta</i>	<i>Sexta</i> tonic
(7) <i>Penta</i>	<i>Penta</i> tonic
(8) <i>Septa</i>	<i>Penta</i> tonic

Each of the 72 *Melakartas* admits of all these eight varieties of transilient ones under it.

*Vakra Ragas* are those derived ones whose ascent or descent or both are oblique. In other words, while singing the notes successively, a prior note is repeated. The note at which the obliquity takes place is known as *Vakraswara*. Again the note at which the obliquity or the irregular course changes and the original course is taken up is known as the *Vakranta* note. There may be from one to four *Vakra* notes in a *Raga*.

The *Ragas* which only use the notes of their parent scale are known as *Upanga Ragas*. But the *Janya Ragas* which take some foreign notes in addition to the notes of their respective parent scale are known as *Bhasanga Ragas*. These foreign notes as a rule should never be unduly emphasised and should only be from the *Svarasthana* 'not covered' by the parent scale. The mere shadow of a note emanating from the adjacent *Svarasthana* is not sufficient. The use of these notes usually

figures in *Sancharas* (improvisation) but there are some *Ragas* in which such a note or notes are also incorporated in the ascent or in the descent or in both.

Thus we find that 'the northern school did not attempt the mathematically possible, but aesthetically impossible, task of obtaining the maximum number of *Ragas*, and chose to start such scales as offered a good aesthetic nucleus'. The north uses *Mela* for the sake of order only, laying more emphasis on the natural similarity of the *Mela*, neglecting the latter, and herein lies the difference between the two systems of classification.

But if we analyse this closely we notice that the musicians of the north and the south classify their *Ragas* on the same basis. In the north, the derivative *Ragas* on the same scale in ancient times were called *Raginis* or wives of the major melodies and the later ones *Putras*, their children. In the south, the derivative melodies were called *Janyas* or born of major melodies which were *Janakas*, or unifiers. The minor melodies of South India are formed by using in the new derivatives five or more notes used in the *Janaka Ragas*, variations being derived from the major *Ragas* by omitting certain notes in the ascent or descent. In *Raga Alapana*, for example, the Hindustani style allows a longer duration to the sonant and sub-sonant notes—which is completely unknown in the southern style. The notes are rendered pure in the north while in the Carnatic style they are rendered with *Gamakas*.

Up to the time of *Jayadeva* the music systems of the south and the north were more or less the same. But with the invasions and conquering of the land by the Muslims, Persian music imperceptibly influenced the music of the north. In the beginning the result was a mixture of Indian and Persian musical systems; and the two styles became fused into a distinct style of music differing sharply from the music of South India. But this fusion came about after decades of uneven and spasmodic development. Sometimes this led to crises in the musical field. But whenever these crises were detected, North India never hesitated to invite the theoreticians and musicians from the south to systematise its music. Thus

we find Pundarika Vitthal, Bhavabhata and Gopal Naik visiting North India at the invitation of the great patrons of music to try their hand at bringing the straying North Indian music nearer to its sister from the South.

This accounts for the fact that not only in their source but also in their growth both systems are fundamentally similar. Barring a few *Alamkaras* (decorations) the melodic patterns are interchangeable though the nomenclature is not always the same. The ground plans of their presentations are very similar and are as follows:

#### North

- (1) *Asthai*: the first subject wherein the *Raga* idea crystallises melodically and rhythmically.
- (2) *Antara*: here the voice registers changes.
- (3) *Sanchari*: the song is developed.
- (4) *Abhog*: this is a return to the *Asthai*; the song is closed with its first note or phrase either on the tonic or the dominant at the choice of the singer.

#### South

- (1) *Pallavi*: the first subject which is focussed on the dominant and has a well defined rhythm.
- (2) *Anupallavi*: the second subject which is focussed on the consonant generally in the upper one.
- (3) *Charanam*: phrases are taken from the *Pallavi* and *Anupallavi* to which are set extra stanzas, if any, allowing wide scope for the use of graces having less punctuated rhythms.
- (4) The Finale which consists of a return to *Pallavi* and the song is closed on the tonic or the fifth above.

In one sense the northerners, in spite of the Persian influence, have adhered more to the ancient texts on music than the southern composers. Many of the *Ragas* mentioned in the *Ratnakara* and other ancient and medieval texts are even now found in their original form in the north, very often retaining their old names. This was possible because musicians of the north, up to the end of the eighteenth century, retained the *Shuddha-Svara-Saptaka* (the unmodified tone scale) of Bharata and Sarangadeva. The only change effected was that the old tone-places of the *Shadji Murchana* were replaced by the *Nishadi Murchana* belonging to the same scale.

The ancient unmodified tone-scale, as we know it, was the *Sri Raga* scale which is the modern *Karaharapriya* of the south and the *Kafi* of the north. This is the scale accepted by Sarangadeva, Lochana, Ahobala, Hridayanarayan and Srinivasa. But the modern Hindustani scale is *Bilawala*, which is a corruption of the *Velavali* of Sarangadeva who has classified it as belonging to the *Nishadi Jati*. This change occurred in the North Indian scale due to the influence of the natural (*Shuddha*) scale of the Western nations, who from the end of the eighteenth century began to import into India various types of musical instruments such as the violin, harmonica and harmonium.

We find the early South Indian music using only the major seven notes as its basis, whereas the major and the five additional gliders (i.e. half sound gliders in between the first and fifth majors and one glider between the fifth and the seventh major) formed the basis of the North Indian system. The adoption of the gliders by the south is a latter-day development and now there are twenty two *Shrutis* or micro-tonal intervals. In the system of South India we find more stress on the permutations and combinations of the notes and more accent on the rhythm than on the melody. This is so even among the musicians of the first order.

Many of the *Ragas* in the two systems are also similarly constructed with differences only in the names. *Kafi* of the north is known as *Karaharapriya* in the south; *Jogiya* of the Hindustani music is known as *Saveri* in the Carnatic music.



The *Kalyana* of the north is South India's *Yamuna Kalyani*. *Bageshri* of the north is sung in the south as *Sri Ranjani* and *Pilu* as *Girvani*. The *Chakaravakam* of the south is known in the north as *Mangala Bhairavi*. The northern *Mishra Kafi* is the *Ananda Bhairavi* of the south. *Malkous* of the north is known in South India as *Hindolam* and the *Alhaiya* passes for *Bilahari*. *Hanumantodi* of the south is known as *Todi* in the north and *Bhairav* of the north is the south's *Maya Malava Goud*. *Shuddha Saveri* of South India is known as *Durga* in the north. *Tilak-kamod* is sung in South India as *Natia*. The *Darbari Kanada*, *Paraj* and many others are the North Indian contribution to the repertoire of South Indian music.

Many of the *Talas*, viz., *Dhruva Tala*, *Shruti Tala*, *Rudra Tala*, *Briksha Tala*, *Chanchatputta*, *Jhaptala*, *Ekatala*, are common to both systems of music. Again many of the *Talas* used in the Vaishnavite form of *Kirtana* style of music prevalent in Bengal are found in the south, viz., *Vikrama*, *Nandana* and *Mantaka* etc.

This raises the question how some of the *Talas* found only in Bengal and not elsewhere in the north are current in the south. It is possible that the Sena dynasty which ruled Bengal in the eleventh century and which originally came from the south had brought some of the musical forms from their native land; or that the Bengali Shaivites who went to preach Shaivism in the south in the eleventh and twelfth centuries had taken the time measure with them to enrich the music of their new home.

When one goes beyond the superficial difference, one finds that in Hindustani music the traces of an eclectic civilisation are visible and in Carnatic music the mark of Dravidian culture is written large. Hindustani music is an ideal synthesis of Aryan initiation and Muslim cultivation; and Carnatic music is a mixture of Aryan motif with Dravidian practice.

Even when borrowing North Indian *Ragas* or *Talas* or adopting their musical styles the artistes of the south 'south-ernised' them in form and spirit. But the music of the south, like its architecture, is an aristocrat rooted in soil and ritual. Both the artistes and builders take delight in elaborate

ornamentation and their creations, whether song or temple, are rich and abundant in motifs. Not an inch of temple wall or a line of song is left bare without some suitable delicate embellishment. There is a rare abundance, and an overflow of emotion, faith and fervour. The same motif is often repeated but shaded here and there, or emphasised with a slighter or larger stress. It is a relentless endeavour on the part of the artiste to drive home to the spectator or the listener the vision and the ecstasy. To persons nurtured in other traditions these repetitions may sometimes seem monotonous or the richness may be tiresome. But ingrained in these repetitions is a discipline and even the monotony has the dynamics of unity.

The ideal way of life in the north is *Dhyana Marga*, as embodied in the contemplating Buddha, calm and tranquil; in the south it is the *Nataraja* (Dancing Shiva), the symbol of eternal movement. In music, too, these two ideals predominate. Being sung on longer time-beats with proper intonations North Indian music seems steady, bold and distinct, whereas in Carnatic the notes, being sung on smaller time-beats, seem indistinct, quavering, and each note seems to hang over the other. In the style of presentation and variation, too, there seems to be a pervading restlessness in the south.

Another important differentiating feature is that the musician of the south cannot take any liberty with the beat of the time measure while in the north the musicians are more concerned with the unity of the rhythm.

There is also a difference in the diurnal and nocturnal classification. The *Ragas* sung in the north in the morning are sung in the south at night. Besides, the style of the north lends itself easily to a 'gentle emotional character of the *Raga* and makes it subtle and reflective'. On the contrary, the southerners with their 'fast time measure and difficult mathematical elaborations and associations of notes without any preference for any one of them, make it a gigantic affair of both mechanical and intellectual effort.'

The South Indian artistes are classical almost to a fault and perhaps they consider that music to be the best which receives the least personal touch of the artiste himself. The music of

every artiste is therefore technically the same.

Like North Indian music, the music of the south, too, underwent many changes at the hands of the reformers of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The first great reformer is Ramamatya who lived in the sixteenth century, followed by Venkatamukhi and others. But the credit of systematising Carnatic music on the lines followed today belongs to Raghunatha Naik (1554-1626), the ruling prince of Tanjore, and his Prime Minister Govinda Dikshitar. The South Indian veena with its twelve fixed frets had its origin in their time. In his book *Sangeeta Sudha*, Raghunatha Naik discussed in detail the conflicting views of the early writers and reconstructed the theory and practice on which modern South Indian music is based. He incorporated many *Ragas* from North Indian music in the South Indian repertory.

It is also said that one Veerbhadraiah contributed a good deal to the shape of Carnatic music in the making. Adapaiah, his disciple, followed in his footsteps and carried the reform further.

The advent of Thyagaraja, Shyama Shastri, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Kshetrajna late in the eighteenth century heralded the golden age of Carnatic music. The keynote of Thyagaraja's composition is the conversational tone and variety of *Kalpana Svaras* which suits the quicker *Laya*. There is an eternal freshness and novelty in his composition though very often the melodic quality falls far short of the highest musical effect. His adornments are varied and profuse. The humane qualities of Thyagaraja's compositions, expressing innumerable moods and feelings, swept the southern country off its feet. To him the music of the south owes its *Kriti* form as well as the art of developing the musical phrases known as *Sangatis*. The style of rendering these compositions remind one of the technique of the rapid movements of notes of the flute. Perhaps more than anyone else he freed music from the bonds of highly intellectual and technical forms and clothed her in humane ones.

Dikshitar's speciality lies in the clear analysis of the *Raga*

structure which, following the ebb and flow of each note and proper use of *Gamaka*, gives sufficient staying quality to the melodic centres of the *Raga*, regulating them in slow measure and thus enhancing their beauty. It is a well-known principle that the best effects of the *Raga* can be adequately expressed by an involuntary staying on the melodic centres of the *Raga*—which is not fully possible in the faster or medium *Layas* though in the latter case the multiple use of *Anuvadis* allows unlimited varieties. He was a born music teacher and he used literary themes merely as a convenient cloak to further the beauty of the musical framework. As to the style of rendering, he would seem to have very skilfully adopted the slow halting gait of the veena.

Both Dikshitar and Thyagaraja have composed in many rare and lesser *Ragas*, apart from the common ones, and in this respect the latter's compositions are obviously better because they are more popular. Where Dikshitar stuck to the old musical phrases Thyagaraja avoided them, anticipating their future obsolescence.

On the other hand Shyama Shastri is the best in the delineation of emotions inherent in the most popular *Ragas* avoiding the antique ones in which Dikshitar revelled. He is less technical but in his compositions we find a perfect synthesis of *Raga* and *Bhava*. His style of rendering is that of a master vocalist.

In vivid contrast to the humane compositions of Thyagaraja, Dikshitar flooded the field with his slow and majestic *Kirtanas*, while the songs of Shyama Shastri crystallised the quintessence of rhythm. Kshetrajna's *Padams* on the other hand are unequalled by their crystallisation of *Ragas* and possess a haunting sweetness comparable only to the compositions of *Kheyal* and *Thumri*.

Dikshitar's compositions centre on *Karunarasa* (sense of pity), Thyagaraja's on *Bhakti* (devotion), Shyama Shastri's on *Shantarasa* (sense of quietude) and Kshetrajna's on the erotic sentiment.

It can be said of Dikshitar, Shyama Shastri and Thyagaraja, as has been said of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms respectively,

that 'in the mathematical formulas of Bach' we find 'the parched beauty waiting for a philosopher to release her into heaven, for the scientist alone and the poet alone could not set her free. The scientist-musician had constructed the massive mausoleum of granite without any windows, and the poet-musician Brahms had produced the fragile multi-coloured windows of stained glasses but without any solid framework to support them. It took the philosopher of music, Beethoven, to build houses for the living, mansions that are solid and at the same time full of air and sunlight and enduring beauty.'

This age also saw Gopalkrishna Bharati, the greatest composer of recitative music of the South. His delightful ditties are representative alike of the purer Carnatic music and the *Phunn* style of Tamil singing. Like Tagore, his northern counterpart, he drew enormously from the folk music and his language is that of an ordinary man.

Since the birth of Carnatic music as a distinct system several *Ragas* have shed the phrases sanctioned by the ancient texts and adopted new ones. The composers Thyagaraja and Dikshitar often differed from Venkatamukhi's theory in the practice of dissonants. Both of them made use of North Indian *Ragas* and made Venkatamukhi's scheme only a starting point for new methods of classification. The present trend in South Indian music is to derive fresh *Ragas* from Venkatamukhi's scheme rather than fit the existing ones into it. Singers of the present time are adopting the *Desiya* (northern) mode of rendering.

Thus we have in the country two distinct musical forms, one perhaps drawing its inspiration from Bharata, Matanga and Sarangadeva while the other seems to have its root in the obscure Nandikeshwara, whose basis is the ancient musical traditions of the Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil countries. Whatever may be the differences of the two systems it is certain that they are not integral but are merely those of presentation and classification. Each system has borrowed many tints and hues from the other as often as possible, yet contriving to remain separate as 'each culture creates distinctively the musical fabric in which the people can wrap

themselves safely and intelligibly. Each person makes the fabric differently as he selects some values which appeal to him more, ignoring the others, thus emphasising a different sector of the whole arc of the musical sense.'

## WORKS CONSULTED

- M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer: *Ragvibodh*  
M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer: *Silappadikaran*  
M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer: *Manosollasam*  
M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer: *Hansasandesham*  
M. S. Ramaswamy Iyer: *Chaturdandi Prakasika*  
Prof. Sambamurthy: *Karnatak Music*. Part I-IV  
Prof. Sambamurthy: *Composers of Karnatak Music*  
Ramachandran: *Ragas of Carnatic Music*

## 20. Carnatic Compositional Types

LIKE North Indian music, Carnatic music has many varieties of compositions which are sung by all musicians.

### VARNAM

It is a dignified and elaborate melodic composition combining within itself *Ranjaka* (pleasing or appropriate note combinations), *Visesha Sancharas* (characteristic elaboration), *Apurva* and *Dhatu Prayogas* (unusual emphasis on notes of the *Raga* for which they are meant and can admit). In the technical group of compositions, the *Varnam* takes the first place. It is always learnt and practised assiduously by vocalists and instrumentalists alike as it helps them to sing or play other pieces in a highly polished and artistic manner. The paucity of words in its composition and the abundance of the use of vowels evenly distributed in it make it as ideal a piece for training the voice as is the *Alapa* of North Indian music. Similarly it helps the instrumentalists to acquire mastery in the use of the fingers. The solfa passages at the end of the *Varnam* serve as models for *Kalpana Svaras* or imaginative arrangement of notes. These solfas are also known as *Ettugada Svaras*, the concluding notes of which are usually short vowels.

*Varnams* generally have two parts. The first part is known as *Purvanga*, consisting of *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Muktai Svaras* or solfa passages in the *Tana Varnam*. The second part known as *Ettuguda* is *Uttaranga* comprising *Charanam*

and the solfa passages suitable to it. Both parts are of equal length.

The *Charanam* of a *Varnam* is also known by other names, viz., *Ettugada*, *Pallavi*, *Upa Pallavi* and *Chitta Pallavi*. The *Charanam* of a *Varnam* is repeated at the end of each *Ettugada Svara*. Sometimes a *Varnam* possesses one or two of the *Upa Pallavis*.

The *Ettugada Svara* passage is progressively increased in length and complexity. The first *Svara* passage is usually an *Avarta* in length and contains innumerable long vowels. The subsequent solfa passages either are of equal length or are somewhat longer. The last solfa passage mostly varies between two and four *Avartas* in length.

*Varnams* are of two kinds, viz., the *Tana Varnams* and the *Pada Varnams*. In the former the *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam* consist of words, the other portions being mere solfa passages. On account of a preponderance of *Tanajatis* (melodic phrases) they are called *Tana Varnam*. They are mostly in long time-measures in *Adi*, *Ata* and *Khanda-jati Triputa* and are seldom composed in shorter time-measures. The short time-measures are obstacles to the free movement of the *Tana* ideas. The *Tana Varnam* presents the *Raga* form in a nutshell. It is sung in all tempos.

*Pada Varnams*, also called *Chauka* or *Ata Varnams*, are sung along with dances. They are compositions with words and follow a slower tempo. Since they are similar to *Padams* in substance and structure and follow the same tempo, they are called *Pada Varnams*.

Some of the *Chauka Varnam* have *Sahitya* for *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam* only, the rest consisting of solfa passages. *Pada-jati Varnams* are *Pada Varnas* having *Jatis* (*Tala* mnemonics) within them. Formerly there was another section known as *Anubandha* consisting of words and solfa parts. But this section has now gone out of use.

In singing the *Varnam*, the *Pallavi* is sung first, followed by *Anupallavi* and the *Muktai Svaras*, and it is rounded off by the *Pallavi*. Each *Avarta* is sung twice with a pause on *Shadaja* or *Panchama* or any other appropriate note similar



to the resting on the proper *Mokams* in North Indian music. After singing each *Ettugada Svara*, a return is made to the *Charanam* in the rendering of which the *Ettugada Svaras* or even the *Sangatis* are not repeated. In the *Pada Varnam* the *Muktai* and *Ettugada Svaras* have some words of the composition but the *Svara* part is first sung pure without any words and then with the corresponding words. When the *Varnam* is used in a dance the *Svara* part is used for footwork of the dance and the literary parts for *Abhinaya* (gestures).

### KRITI

The *Kriti* is the most developed type of musical composition in the South. It has been defined as 'that which is composed'. This type came into vogue in the eighteenth century.

The *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and the *Charanam* are the main parts of a *Kriti*. There may be one or more *Charanams*. The second *Charanam* is called *Mudracharanam* (closing foot or closing line) where the composer indicates his name.

*Kritis* are sometimes embellished by *Chitta Svaras* depicting a certain aspect of the *Raga* not covered by the composition itself. These *Chitta Svaras* are solfa passages in two or four *Avartas* in *Adi Tala* or in 3 or 16 *Avartas* in *Chapu*, *Triputa* or *Rupaka Tala* and they are sung in the medium tempo at the end of the *Anupallavi* and *Charanam*. It is not infrequent that *Tala* mnemonics are introduced in the middle of the *Chitta Svara*. These are called *Slokanta Svaras*.

Sometimes *Viloma Chitta Svaras* are added to the *Kritis* to heighten their effect. This is an arrangement of notes which can be sung both from the beginning to the end or in the reverse order without spoiling the *Raga* structure in any way. This reverse process is known as *Viloma*.

Often suitable literary compositions are appended to the *Chitta Svara* and these are called *Svara Sahitya*. The *Svara* part is sung at the end of the *Anupallavi* and the literary part after the *Charanam*.

A passage known as *Madhyamakala*, meaning a passage to be sung in the medium or quicker tempo, always occurs either

at the end of the *Anupallavi* or the *Charanam* or both, adding a majesty to the whole composition.

The *Kriti* is begun with *Pallavi* and is followed by the *Anupallavi* and *Chitta Svara* (if the composition has one) and is often rounded off with the *Pallavi*. Then the *Charanam* is sung which is again followed by the *Chitta Svara* and is concluded by the *Pallavi*. If in place of the *Chitta Svara* the composition possesses a *Svara Sahitya* it is sung at the end of the *Anupallavi* and the *Charanam* and this helps to reveal the technical beauty of the *Raga*.

*Sangatis*, or variations of the musical theme, when sung are repeated twice to enable the listeners to follow the gradual changes of the *Dhatu*. The *Sangatis* are introduced to emphasise certain delicate and latent shades in the inner aspect of the *Ragabhava*. At the end of the *Anupallavi* and *Charanam* the last line of the *Pallavi* is sung once only and the composition is concluded. Some *Kriti Pallavis* have special *Sangatis* which are generally sung after the *Anupallavi* and *Charanam*.

When *Kritis* have *Charanams* of different *Dhatus*, all the *Charanams* are sung. But if all the *Charanams* have the same *Dhatu* it depends on the singer as to how many *Charanams* he would sing. The *Mudra Charana* is invariably sung and the others sung if they help to develop the *Nirval* or *Kalpana Svara*.

## PADAM

The *Padam* too has three sections, viz., *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam*. The *Charanams* may be three or more in number but all of them have the same music. No *Sangatis* or other difficult schemes are introduced in the *Padams* generally. In the *Padams* the music of the *Anupallavi* is repeated in the second half or in the last quarter of the *Charanam*. In a few *Padams* the music of the first half of the *Charanam* is often the same as that of the *Pallavi*. The *Padam* is sung in the same way as the *Kriti* but it is usually started with the *Anupallavi* and is followed by the *Pallavi*.

## JAVALI

The name is exotic. It is perhaps derived from the Arabic word *Jalali* meaning 'that which excites'. This word was later vulgarised as Javali. The name is appropriate as this type of song excites the baser human senses because it is a love song pure and simple; in fact, it is all mundane and very much sensuous in concept and spirit. It is lyrical and is always set to sweet or sad and mellow *Ragas* and moves with a gentle and often frolicsome gait. It is full of feelings and abounds in subtle suggestions of amorous play and forms an excellent vehicle for *Abhinaya* (gesture-play) in dance. It has also three sections, viz., the *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam*. But the number of *Charanams* is sometimes more than one and some of the *Javalis* do not possess the *Anupallavi* at all.

## RAGAMALIKA

*Ragamalika* means a garland of melodies. It is a regular composition with the sections set in different *Ragas*. It has a similar section as that of a *Kriti* or *Charanam*, *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi*. But the *Charanams* are as many as the *Ragas* introduced into the composition and all are of an equal length. The *Anupallavi* is generally set in the same *Raga* as the *Pallavi* and when that is so the length of the *Pallavi* and the *Anupallavi* together are equal to the length of each of the other *Charanams*. It is also common practice not to include *Anupallavi* in the *Ragamalika*.

The *Anupallavi* and the *Charanams* are followed by the *Chitta Svaras* in the respective *Ragas* which are rounded off by a short complementary solfa passage in the same *Raga* as the *Pallavi*. This connecting solfa passage helps to link the music of the *Anupallavi* and the *Charanam* on the one hand and the *Pallavi* on the other. Thus the transition from one *Raga* to the other is made smooth and easy for the ear. At the end of the composition, a solfa passage of one or half of one *Avarta* is sung in as many *Ragas* as the *Ragamalika* comprises to heighten the effect of the whole composition.

The *Ragas* used in the composition are chosen in such a way that the passage from one *Raga* to the other does not become inharmonious or abruptly disturb the mood of the listeners. *Ragas* of a similar nature are therefore generally chosen in this kind of composition. But when the *Ragas* are so chosen as to represent different sentiments, a complementary solfa passage of the *Pallavi* called *Pallavi Svara* is sung at the end of each section in order to maintain some kind of continuity.

There are some musical compositions with *Tala* or the time-measure as the basic fact for differentiation. They are as follows.

1. *Talamalika*. This is a composition in which the different sections are sung in different *Talas* but the melody or the *Raga* is the same throughout.

2. *Panchatalesvar*. It is similar to *Talamalika* but consists of only five sections, each set in one *Margi Tala*. It is the modern prototype of the ancient *Talarnavam* in which the *Udgraha*, *Dhruva*, *Melapak*, *Antara* and *Abhog* were sung in different *Talas*.

3. *Ragatalamalika*. In this type of composition each section is set in a different *Raga* and *Tala*. It has many varieties—*Srivilasa*, *Sriranga Prabandha* and *Umatilaka Prabandha*.

4. *Tillana*. The *Tillana* of the south is similar to the *Hindusthani Tarana*.

On analysis it would be found that the different sections of the principal South Indian compositions are similar to those of the north. Thus the *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam* of South India have their counterparts in the *Asthayi*, *Antara*, *Sanchari* and *Abhog* of North India. The *Asthayi* and the *Pallavi* are co-terminus, as both of them contain the main subject of the melody moving around the dominant. The *Antara* and *Anupallavi* are synonymous, containing the second subject, using the higher tetrachord and focussing the sub-dominant. The *Sanchari* and *Charanam* are both a mixture of the former two sections of the musical piece. They both return to *Asthayi* and *Pallavi* respectively where the music stops. *Charanam* of the south is sometimes formed by manipulating

the *Pallavi* and *Anupallavi* notes. Sometimes the *Anupallavi* is omitted altogether.

What the *Dhrupad* is to the north the *Kriti* is to the south. They are alike in subject, spirit and the place they occupy in their respective systems of music. The *Padam* is the equivalent of the northern *Kheyal* though the theme of the former is sometimes more serious. The *Javali* is similar to the *Thumri* of the north, light and gay in spirit and tune. The difference is only one of emphasis on the basic sentiments and the mode of rendering according to their respective traditional ways of expression. But in their fundamental approach to music, their comprehension and understanding of its spirit in the basic structure of their composition, they are alike being rooted in the ancient lore of Bharata, Matanga and scores of other forgotten masters of the art.

## 21. Raga and Rasa

ART IS impression and expression on one side and representation and communication on the other. The impressions or ideas received from the outer world after exciting, clashing or corresponding with the experience or experiences stored within are synthesised by the force of contemplative spirit (which is a cognitive force), otherwise called intuition, and 'pass by means of either words or lines or colours or tones imitating the joy, passion or the suffering condition of the soul' becoming expression and representation. Expression is the actuality of intuition and representation is its visible or audible form.

Proper representation possesses an element of address or communication which, using the congenial medium, gives the artist his purpose. In communicating his message he creates beauty that sways the feelings of the audience, inducing in their minds a sort of thrill unworldly in nature which has been called *Rasa*.

'Our emotions are the gastric juices which transform this world of appearance into the more intimate world of sentiment. On the other hand this outer world has its own juices having their various qualities which excite our emotional activities. This phenomenon is called *Rasa* in Sanskrit rhetoric, which signifies outer juices having their response in the inner juices of our emotions.'<sup>1</sup>

Pandit Jagannatha, one of the court poets of Emperor Shahjehan, discussing *Rasa* in his incomparable work on aesthetics, *Rasa Gangadhara*, has used the term *Ramaniya*

in the sense of the beautiful and has defined literature as 'that which brings out the sense of the beautiful in an apt consonance of words and their meanings'. If we just change a few words in this definition in the context of music and say 'that which evokes the sense of beauty in a fit consonance of tones (*Svara*) and their suggestibility', we shall not be far from the truth.

He also states that the beautiful is that which evokes a unique feeling quite distinct from all other joys and sorrows and possesses something of a transcendental element in it. He further describes this thrill as something other than utilitarian. Tagore echoed the same sentiment when he spoke of it as 'that which gives us joy without any sense of utility'. This feeling is called *Rasaswadana* which is a state completely unrelated to desire or fulfilment of desire. The nature of this aesthetic feeling is 'pure, indivisible, self-manifested, compounded equally of joy and consciousness, free of admixture with any other perception, the very twin brother of mystic experience and the very life of it, a supersensuous wonder.'<sup>2</sup>

Indian psychologists of yore regarded the emotions or feelings of *Sringara* (erotic), *Roudra* (anger), *Hasya* (comic), *Bibhatsa* (ludicrous), *Vira* (heroic), *Karuna* (pathos), *Jugupsa* (disgust), *Vishmaya* (wonder) and *Shanta* (peace), deeply rooted in the human nature, as the primary states (*Sthayi Bhava*) of mind. These basic feelings express themselves through their large number of *Bibhavas* (incidentals) and *Vyabhichari* (transitory) phases, which by their joint efforts produce feelings which are accepted as the sole products of the basic emotions called *Anubhava*. These basic emotions are universal and inseparable from man. They are basic in the sense that each of them can overpower a man completely. The *Bibhava* and *Vyabhichari Bhava* can rightly be compared to the different figures in a composition which always tend to heighten the effects of the main figure for which alone they exist.

A medieval poet has beautifully expressed how the *Rasa* is evoked and developed and how it fulfils itself. 'The human mind is the soil on which the *Sthayi Bhava*, which is the

seed, sprouts by the water of *Vibhava* into a plant called *Anubhava* which depends on the environment. *Vyabhichari Bhavas* are the flowers which blossom at frequent intervals. These blossoms produce a honey which is called *Rasa* which the *Rasika* (connoisseur) collects, acting as the bee."<sup>3</sup>

The quality of appreciation is natural and innate in man and is rooted in the unconscious. At its source all art is amorphous. While moving from the unconscious towards expression, it makes intimate contacts with the memory and intuition of the artist as well as of the listener and these contacts aid in the expression and appreciation.

This occurs only when the sense images so enter the mind as to mingle or affiliate with the various emotional streams, tendencies, subconscious wishes and desires and the like.

Etymologically the word *Raga* means colouring or passion, psychologically suggesting to the Indian ear the idea of mood. Its purpose thus is to express and arouse a particular unison of passions of body and mind both in man and in nature.

Therefore, to understand the psychological effect of a *Raga*, it is necessary to know the inner meaning of the notes and how their combination creates a particular effect on the mind. The subject was, to some extent, investigated by Bharata and he was followed by Sarangadeva. But it came to be neglected thereafter. After careful study, these ancient writers analysed the impression of each note on the listener and determined the value of its sentiments. This finally led them to equate each tone with a particular feeling and emotion.

The music masters of the old did not stop with this statement of the general sentiments and value of the notes. They delved deeper and sought to establish the emotive values of all possible microtones too. For this purpose a veena with twenty-two strings was made and each string was tuned to a *Shruti* to facilitate the determination of its emotional value in relation to the main note *Sa* which was the natural note, produced with ease and representing a mental state of felicity and equanimity (*Shanta Bhava*). The results of these investigations are reflected in the names given to the individual *Shrutis* and a study of these names would indicate their



emotive value in the following manner.

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|--|---|
| (1) <i>Chandovati</i> (from the word <i>Chandas</i> —will and independent conduct) | indicates peace of mind, heroism and generosity.    |
| (2) <i>Dayavati</i> (from <i>Daya</i> —compassion and sympathy)                    | indicates piety, tenderness and affection.          |
| (3) <i>Ranjani</i> (from <i>Ranj</i> —colouring)                                   | indicates pleasure, delight, and appreciation.      |
| (4) <i>Raktika</i> (from <i>Rakti</i> —pleasure)                                   | indicates charm, wonder, devotion and passion.      |
| (5) <i>Roudri</i> (from <i>Roudri</i> —heat)                                       | indicates wrath, warmth and enthusiasm.             |
| (6) <i>Krodhi</i> (from <i>Krodh</i> —thunder)                                     | indicates hardness and determination.               |
| (7) <i>Vajrika</i> (from <i>Vajra</i> —thunder)                                    | indicates hardness and determination.               |
| (8) <i>Prasarani</i> (from <i>Prasara</i> —expansion)                              | indicates enquiry, expansion, explanation.          |
| (9) <i>Priti</i> (from <i>Priti</i> —liking)                                       | indicates friendliness, affection, favour.          |
| (10) <i>Marjani</i> (from <i>Marjana</i> —cleaning or washing)                     | indicates banter and ridicule.                      |
| (11) <i>Khshiti</i> (from <i>Ksha</i> —decay)                                      | indicates loss or grievance.                        |
| (12) <i>Rakta</i> (from <i>Ranj</i> —colouring)                                    | indicates affection, attachment, excitement, worry. |
| (13) <i>Sandipani</i> (from <i>Sandipan</i> —to inflame)                           | indicates kindling of love or excitement.           |
| (14) <i>Alapini</i> (from <i>Alap</i> —talk)                                       | suggests harmony, friendship and entreaty.          |
| (15) <i>Madanti</i> (from <i>Mada</i> —pride, passion)                             | indicates passion, intoxication and madness.        |
| (16) <i>Rohini</i> (from <i>Ruha</i> —grow)  | indicates quiet, solitude, musing and tranquillity. |
| (17) <i>Ramya</i> (from <i>Ram</i> —rest)  | indicates quiet, solitude, musing and tranquillity. |

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|--|---|
| (18) <i>Ugra</i> (from <i>Ugra</i> —<br>powerful)      | expresses formidableness,<br>fear and awe.  |
| (19) <i>Kshovini</i> (from <i>Kshu</i> —<br>trembling) | indicates agitation and<br>worry.           |
| (20) <i>Tivra</i> (from <i>Tivra</i> —<br>sharp)       | indicates acuteness, heat<br>and violence.  |
| (21) <i>Kumudvati</i> (from <i>Kum-<br/>uda</i> —lily) | indicates simplicity and<br>gaiety.         |
| (22) <i>Manda</i> (from <i>Manda</i> —<br>slow)        | indicates lack of zest, lei-<br>sureliness. |

These twenty-two *Shrutis* have been classified into five groups, viz., *Dipta* (glowing) which contains *Tivra*, *Roudri*, *Vajrika* and *Ugra shrutis*; *Ayata* (enlarged) which contains *Kumudvati*, *Krodhi*, *Pasarani* and *Sandipani shrutis*; *Karuna* (compassion) which contains *Dayavati*, *Alapani* and *Madanti shrutis*; *Mridu* (soft) which contains *Manda*, *Raktika*, *Priti* and *Kshiti shrutis*; and *Madhya* (intermediate) which contains *Chandovati*, *Ranjani*, *Marjani* and others not found in the first four groups.

With this analysis it should now be easier to find the emotional value of the scales. According to an ancient Indian text, *Shadaja* comprises *Tivra*, *Kumudvati* and *Manda* and so it has been called the key to *Shanta Rasa*. *Rishabha* contains *Dayavati*, *Ranjani* and *Raktika shrutis* and so has been assigned for *Adbhuta Rasa*. *Gandhara* takes *Roudri*, *Krodhi* and *Vajrika* and is related to *Roudra Rasa*. *Madhyama* has *Prasarini* *Priti* and *Marjani shrutis* and so is associated with love. *Panchama* *Kshiti*, *Rakta*, *Sandipani* and *Alapini* are the keys to the sentiment of eroticism. *Madanti*, *Rohini*, *Ramya* and *Ugra* and *Kshovini* go to make *Dhaivata* and *Nishada* notes respectively which have been named to express *Bibhatsa* and *Karuna Rasas*.

The main element responsible for emotion in music is the tonal relationship of notes, which is based on the sonant-consonant relationship with the fundamental notes of the drone. The use of consonant notes makes the music brighter and livelier and enhances its pleasingness, while the use of

dissonant notes tends to make music discordant and hence dull and morose.

The closer the harmonic relationship of a note with the tonic, i.e. the drone, the greater is the degree of its consonancy; and the farther this harmonic relationship with the tonic the greater is the degree of dissonancy. With these two points in view we can classify the individual character of each note in relationship to the tonic note.

Absolute consonance	Unison and Octave
Perfect consonance	<i>G</i> and <i>F</i>
Medial consonance	<i>F</i> and <i>F</i> Flat
Imperfect dissonance	<i>D</i> and <i>A</i>
Complete dissonance	Flat <i>D</i>
	Flat <i>A</i>
	Flat <i>B</i>
	Sharp <i>F</i>

The minor seventh in Indian music is mostly associated with either the fifth or fourth and when it is so it is a medial consonance. The rest falls in the category of imperfect dissonance.

The appeal of music, as that of other arts, has an obviously psychological character. The tones of music, like the separate sound of syllables, may be pleasant or unpleasant but the character of music and its aesthetic effect depends on the succession of the notes and relationship. The tone of a note is invariably affected by the tonal sequence in which it appears. Tones, like colours, may be themselves pleasant or unpleasant but their effect becomes intensified when they appear in conjunction with other notes due to their relationship with the other nuances of tones. Tones, moreover, like any other sensation, evoke memories and associations. Some tones may be pleasant, some sharp and some others soft. But these individual effects are woven together in a rhythmic process to constitute a musical composition. A note sets a given musical expectation which the melodic development fulfils. The whole elaborate construction of the most intricate musical

composition therefore is simply an arrangement and development of notes with harmonic relationship with each other.

But we all know that a *Raga* is not sung around only one note but consists of five or more notes. How then is the *Rasa* of a *Raga* to be determined? It should always be remembered that the *Raga* system is built on the principle that each *Raga* always gives prominence to one or a group of notes. This emphasis on a particular note or group of notes is thus continued throughout the *Raga*, maintaining its swing and overpowering effect by the subordination of other notes. The notes being either absolute or perfect medial consonances and dissonances, along with the emotional appeal of the *Vadi-Samvadi* notes of the individual *Raga* which are also of the above three types, help to determine the *Rasa* inherent in the *Raga*. By using one of the absolute or perfect consonances as the *Vadi* the music can be made gay and cheerful while by using one of the imperfect consonances as such the melody can be turned into one not so cheerful. This is so because the ear has a natural tendency to anticipate an immediate consonant and if, instead of that, a dissonant intervenes the result is either disappointment or disgust or depression. The situation would be slightly better if a medial consonance is used instead of the anticipated perfect or absolute consonance which will render the emotional appeal indeterminate.

Ancient Indian musical aesthetes have gone deeper into the character of the notes and have left their conclusion for consideration by posterity. According to them the characteristic of the notes *C* and *F* is to suggest or evoke a feeling of tranquillity. The note *D* is stated to evoke a sharp, i.e. hard or harsh, feeling while the notes *E* and *A* are expected to suggest sentiments solemn, serious or grave. *G* is evocative of the joyous or gay mood while *B* is the source of the sad and sorrowful. They did not stop here but went a step further to fix the notes suitable as *Vadis* for expressing the correct sentiments. According to them *C*, *G* and *F* are suitable *Vadis* for gay tunes; *D*, *A* and *B* for erotic ones; and *G* for tunes expressing fear, pity and disgust. A Western aesthete agreed long afterwards with the spirit of this statement of the Indian

musicologists when he said, 'There are certain sounds natural to joy, others to grief or despondency, and others to tenderness and love.'<sup>4</sup>

The individuality of a dominant note can be expressed in two ways: either by singing it with frequency thus repeating the emphasis or by placing it in juxtaposition with one of the dissonants.

But before using the consonance, for creating a kind of curiosity in the mind of the listener the artist often does not reveal the full implications of the *Vadi* note; he simply gives a hint of it repeatedly but deliberately postpones it by using delaying notes. This postponement of the dominant suitable to the *Raga* at a critical moment creates a sense of tension in the listener who desires it to be removed. This is a very clever trick of the Indian masters corresponding to the *appoggiatura* of the Western musical system. If the *Raga* happens to be a cheerful one the tension is removed successfully to the satisfaction of the listener by skilfully bringing out the dominant or other appropriate consonant which is generally one of the prime notes of the drone. If the *Raga* is of a sad or dull disposition the tension is not removed at all and instead a dissonant is used to make the effect more specific.

Such notes of the *Raga* are used with a double purpose in view: either for toning up or down the individual characteristic of a note in the scale or for *appoggiatura*. In the latter case if such notes are used as lead to strong consonances, it is found that they are usually none other than the fundamentals or their fourths or fifths which are also the primes of the drone that renders the effect more pleasant. But for creating a sad or dull effect the Indian masters only use those notes as leading ones which either precede or follow the primes by a semitone. As compared with the Western musicians who generally possess only one leading note, i.e., the sharp seventh for leading to the next higher note which is the octave, the Indian musician has at his disposal six such notes, two for each primes, viz., the sharp seventh and the flat second acting as the upward and downward leading note for the Tonic, the

*sharp fourth and the flat sixth for the major fifth and major third and sharp fourth for the major fourth. Thus they use not only the upward or the downward—not even one or two—but all with equal facility as the occasion demands.*

To create the mood more specifically the individual character of the notes are changed or modified by effecting the appropriate change in the tonal quality, and subjecting them to a rhythmic variation. Creating such variety in the musical expressions help the listener recall to his mind the necessary experience and mood, thus making his mental climate more specific.

Though there is an inherent difference between the consonants and dissonants, yet a judicious employment of dissonants strengthens the consonants or reveals more clearly the character of the consonants even as the use of black next to white emphasises the colours. Hence we find in Indian music an interplay of this type of contrast very frequently.

By the use of suitable dominants and musical expressions a responsive mood can be created in the listener's mind only to a limited extent though his mind cannot be fully touched. To ensure the full effect of music the listener has to be freed from the impact of his day-to-day world and led into a new world of feeling and sentiment, of beauty and joy. This will be more easily comprehensible if we know how the mind of the artiste works at the time of creation and how he communicates his feeling to the listener.

We all know that behind all artistic creation there exists an emotional urge to express in form some vaguely felt or perceived experience. When this urge comes to the surface, there begins the creative process in the dark corridor of the mind, i.e. in the subconscious of the artistes where lie in wait many half-sleeping and forgotten mental states or tendencies. Suddenly an incomprehensible but powerful impulse in the form of stimulus enters the artiste's consciousness and penetrates to the deeper levels of his mind where it finds memories, associations and analogies. Immediately a process of comparison takes place within and creates a new intuition. It must be remembered that all artistic creation is a special form of

intuition which represents the reaction of a man's whole personality to the new experience. The musician brings to this process another factor, the power of symbolising the intuition in sound. This symbolisation is man's fundamental mental capacity which consists of substituting one image for another, usually of a simpler form but richer content. This mental activity leads the creator to the succession of tones helping him to select them and arrange them in harmony among themselves as well as with his own creative impulse. By this process of selection, alteration, emphasis, suppression and contrast of the tones the artiste is able to transform the vague and shadowy mental outline into a definite external form of tonal symphony by an unknown inner logic and mysterious inherent teleology which gives him an unique satisfaction and induces a thrill.

This state of *Rasasvadana* was till the time of Jagannatha associated with pleasure or was co-terminus with the sense of pleasure. But Jagannatha for the first time differed from aestheticians who preceded him or were his contemporaries and declared that this aesthetic state was neither identical with pleasure nor pleasurable in itself. He designated this aesthetic state of mind by the word *Chamatkara* which, in psychological terms, is a psycho-physiological level brought about by the integrating impulses in which the sympathetic nervous system, the viscera and the smooth muscle tissues are all involved. This state transcends the composite mental state and produces the aesthetic attitude.

The various stages which go to evoke *Chamatkara* are: the objective data; the sensory and mental image; their intermingling in a particular form; their mental responses to the subconscious or conscious mental data already there; and the emergent creation of the aesthetic state resulting in *Chamatkara*.

The subconscious is a great storehouse of various impressions collected therein at the time of various experiences already gathered quite apart from the objects through which they have been experienced. Whenever any external stimulus stirs this impression it is excited and awakened from deep

slumber in an imageless way evoking an inner thrill or joy.

Indian art critics are of opinion that it depends entirely on the capacity of the artiste to fill the listener with an emotion similar to his own—an emotion in which the listener's personality can for the time being be swamped in such a manner that it becomes immune to any other alien element which may disturb him.

At this time the words of music, tones, their intonation, pronunciation and other expressive capacities of the artiste stimulate the forgotten and vague impressions stored up in the realm of the unconscious, feed them on similar idioms, strengthen them with similar imageries, thus making the vague or imageless impresses clearer. When these outside stimuli are in harmony with the inner feeling of the listener he feels a kind of exhilaration which becomes the aesthetic state. This joy associated with the sense of beauty is due to his self-affiliating, self-recognising and self-realising mental activity in the objective world.

The aim of all art is to cause a temporary self-oblivion in the listener. This makes him forget temporarily even certain bodily functions. This can be noticed in the actions of the respiratory system and in the tenseness of the balancing muscles of the body. The suspense created by climaxes in music distracts the listener's attention from the physical world and leads his mind to the super-sensory plane. Consequently he becomes less and less conscious of his surroundings. And the hypnosis induced is a state of intense concentration of the mind to such a degree that it can ignore all kinds of hurts including pain and fear and absorb suggestions far more readily. An idea introduced at this juncture naturally becomes locked in the mind which again in its turn sets up a cyclic disturbance in the mind. The words of the song naturally influence the listener's behaviour by entering the unconscious at this opportune moment.

It is well known that man is a creature whose fundamental processes of living are rhythmic in character which endows his whole emotional life with a quality that makes him extraordinarily responsive to musical rhythms. Therefore the beats



and subtle rhythmic variations of music never fail to affect the more discerning and cultivated listeners because they lead to experiences resulting from the unusual organic responses which accompany the rhythm of the body in which the fluctuations are less marked and the tension of the organs also ceases, producing a greater harmony of physical functions due to organic changes. The external stimuli seem new at this moment and naturally the listener feels differently—as if they suggest a fresh fulfilment in vital mental processes transcending the relation of space and time which gives him a vague feeling of wholeness creating in him a kind of thrill.

This bodily state and mental condition are created by the musical rhythm accompanied by drumming as there is something impervious about musical rhythms supported by the drum. 'We either do not listen to music or in listening to it become for the time being one with its time and rhythm.' This impact of rhythm on the body and mind can be realised from the extraordinary effect and incentive to action that war music and religious music achieved in primitive peoples. The hypnosis of music arises from the fact that we 'respond to it not merely with the ear but with the whole movement of our bodies and the tempo of our imaginations.'<sup>5</sup> We are rushed along its current and become for the moment part of the current ourselves—bringing a kind of mental passivity.

This hypnotic state exercises important and beneficial effects on the function of the lower nervous system thus causing a slight degree of dissociation which assists the higher thought processes and paves the way for the suggestions of tones and words of the song to sink into the unconscious. The rhythmic variations by themselves also evoke many associative memories and thus help in strengthening the sentiment of the song in the listener.

This mental state helps the listener to be unconsciously led to live his life along the progression of the rise and fall, deviation and resolution of tones which constitutes the melody, an abstract and spaceless theme singing through time, capable of carrying the listener's attention more poignantly and intimately and objectifying his will.

*The emotion thus apprehended and intuited is a purely universal character and as a result thereof the ordinary pathological symptoms of the emotion lose their significance and pathological character and yet the listener has the experience of joy.*

The effect of the melody is sensorial and in this the singer and the melody sung act as one unit like the transmitter and the receiver. If either of these is defective or otherwise unsuitable the effect of the music is vitiated. It is a well-known principle in the physics of sound that the ear drum resonating with the incoming sound can generate its own sympathetic sounds which with the original may set up a melody of its own. We have a practical example of it when we tune the tambura. When the four strings of a tambura are tuned correctly it produces a melody of its own by generating sympathetic sounds. Here is an explanation of the phenomenon often seen in musical circles when favourite musicians sing even third-rate music which is genuinely appreciated and applauded. If melody is relative and is the result of two variables, namely, the singer and the sung music, it may be possible by a process of elimination to isolate the basic feature or soul of melody in music. We may define melody as a series of notes in a particular order of modulation and rhythm which forms an aesthetic unity; but apart from this definition we have no precise ways and means of measuring or evaluating its qualities.

The influence of music on the majority of people is more indefinite than that of other arts because of its symbolism which, though genuine, is not able to represent the causes or external circumstances of feeling due to a lack of assigned connotation. Having no conventional words it is unable to appeal to the logic of reason and yet it is fully capable of expressing the inexpressible emotive, sentient experiences which are beyond the powers of the spoken language.

The reason for this is not far to seek. The 'forms' of human feelings are much more akin to musical forms than the forms of the spoken language. Music can, therefore, more easily reveal in detail the depth and truth of the nature of feelings.

'There are feelings which are so constantly suppressed by the tumult of our passions that they only reveal themselves timidly, yet practically remaining unknown to us. Note, however, what response a certain kind of music evokes in our hearts: we are attentive, it is charming; it does not aim to arouse either sorrow or joy, pity or anger and yet we are moved by it.'<sup>6</sup> Human feelings normally lie inhibited and repressed, and music touches the hidden chords and releases feelings which unconsciously makes the listener either sing along with the singer or beat the musical rhythms or merely stare or take a tense attitude.

People in general, unaware of the principles of aesthetics, believe that all good music is beautiful. But it should be realised that the best music in India is not beautiful but sublime. And there is a clear distinction between the two. 'The sense of the sublime comes from a conflict, a strain of tense emotion seeking rest' and 'the dynamism of the sublime demands our fervent spiritual participation in its striving.' We have already seen how in our music are delineated the different emotional moods and conflicts. When sung, they either stabilise in the listener similar conflicts inherent in them or emphasise them, thereby creating a sort of restlessness which by a spiritualisation of emotions results in a kind of rest.

The sense of beauty, on the other hand, 'springs from the reposeful balance' and 'the equilibrium of the beautiful allows us a serene and calm contemplation of the harmony'. This is not greatly possible in music as, being a string of passing or vanishing sounds, it disappears a few minutes after the tones are sung, leaving some vague impressions in the listener's mind. The sublime addresses the emotion in contrast to the beautiful which appeals to the intellect.

Often it is complained that music awakens two quite different types of moods or sentiments in the listeners. At the outset it baffles our understanding and may even seem to be incongruous. But once we go to its very roots we find the contradiction resolving itself especially when we realise that music reflects the morphology of feelings and as such is capable of inspiring two different types of sentiments when both of

them have a similar morphology. This 'possibility of expressing opposites simultaneously gives the most intricate reaches of expressiveness to music as such. and carries it . . . far beyond the limits of other arts.'<sup>7</sup>

Because the ordinary people do not understand the symbolism of tone or group of tones music seems to be an abstraction. And for the very nature of its symbolism which has no assigned connotation it remains unconsummated and hence is not transparent but iridescent.

But symbolism cannot be avoided in any work of art. And music, like other arts, 'is not a matter of thought but rather of feelings' and instead of being statements it uses such symbols 'in which no assignment of meaning is conventional'. Symbols in music being passing sounds, they cannot communicate clearly—which is the forte of all other arts—but it no doubt gives a flash of understanding. 'Not communication but insight is the gift of music.'

Max Schoen, an American psychologist who has conducted an empirical study by the use of gramophone records, has found that music produces a change in the existing state of the listener—which change he classified under nine heads as under:

- (1) Dreamy, tranquil, soothing, soft.
- (2) Sentimental, passionate, yearning, pleading, melting.
- (3) Sad, pathetic, tragic, mournful.
- (4) Solemn, spiritual, grave.
- (5) Cheerful, gay, joyful.
- (6) Graceful.
- (7) Spirited, exciting, exhilarating.
- (8) Martial, majestic.
- (9) Sensational and thrilling.

All these may be equated with the nine *Rasas* of the Indian music tradition.

He has concluded (a) that music produces a definite effect—the most dominating being a feeling of rest; and (b) that vocal music has greater powers of producing effects than

instrumental music.<sup>8</sup> These also correspond to the findings of the Hindu psychologists of yore.

Indian texts abound in examples of and proofs for the curative value of music. Modern research in the West is gradually veering round to the opinion that music has various effects on matter and mind and is of both physical and psychical nature. What these effects are and how they function individually and collectively on matter and mind have still to be tackled by modern science.

From the point of view of Indian aesthetics, the *Rasa-svadana*, or the tasting of the essential flavour of a melody, depends mainly on the aesthete (*Rasika*) and his mental and emotional equipment and capacity. The artiste creates the mental and emotional climate and suggests his idea. The force and flow of the *Rasa* depend on the imagination and the experiences of the aesthete as men 'always respond to music by their own personal and associative imagination, tinged with effect, tinged with bodily rhythm and tinged with dream.'<sup>9</sup> That partly explains why our singers do not care to make their voices attractive as 'those of the audience whose senses are to be satisfied are held beneath the notice of any self-respecting artist'. The canon of Indian art appreciation is mostly subjective, that is, it depends entirely upon the qualities of the listener and is transferred by him into the object or thing which he sees or hears. Hence 'those of the audience who are appreciative are content to perfect the song in their own minds by the force of their own feelings.' Aesthetic sense which is contemplation is also an inward expression. The degree in which we understand or appreciate a work of art depends upon our ability to see by direct intuition the reality portrayed, our power to form for ourselves an expressive image as 'it is always our own intuition we express when we are enjoying a beautiful work of art'.<sup>10</sup>

Indian art and music do not deal specially with individual transient emotions. This characteristic strikes all who are able to understand and appreciate it. In it one hardly meets the joys and sorrows of an individual life, expressed so effectively in Western music. Like all Indian arts, music never aims at

giving the struggle of individual emotions or their intensity. The purpose of art—not conscious, of course—has always been to establish the identity of intuition and expression.

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## 22. Music and Her Sisters

TO ALL OUTWARD appearances there is no similarity between architecture and music as the former exists in space without any relation to time whereas the latter exists in time alone without any relation to space. But when we go under this superficial crust which differentiates the one from the other, we find to our surprise that the governing principles of both the arts are symmetry and rhythm and both of them possess a single idea as their substratum. It is this derivation from a common source and guidance by the same principle that gives von Schlegel the inspiration to describe architecture as frozen music. Nowhere else is this more true than in India. Here we find music and architecture pursuing the same course of development.

From the very early times architects in India adopted the ratio of the musical scale in the art of building. "The ratios in music relate to the lengths of identical strings and at the same tension. Numerically these musical intervals correspond to the ratios of the proportionate measurement of the temple. The height of its walls, the height of the *Shikhara* and the total height of *Prasada* are in the progressive series 5: 10: 15. With this series are combined as proportionate measurement the ratios of 2: 1, 2, 3: 2 corresponding to the octave and to the fifth in music."<sup>1</sup> Besides this, we find some of the ancient musical compositions going by the names of the prevalent architectural styles, viz., *Nandavarta* and *Vesara*.

This connection of musical proportions with temple architecture continued throughout the medieval ages.

But with the advent of the Muslim hegemony there was a severance of this relationship and we find both the architectural and musical styles groping in the dark for some time for their respective new forms, having lost their old moorings. At the fag end of the Pathan rule, architecture found a new form in the Turko-Indian style and music found a new form in *Dhrupad*. But both were still incomplete and had yet to attain their finished forms.

By the time of Akbar, the architectural style of the country completed one phase of its development and evolved a finished form of its own. If we study the architectural style of Fatehpur-Sikri, we find in it a perfect fusion of the Hindu and Muslim forms. It presents a rare combination of the dignity and massive strength of the Hindu art with the grace and simplicity of the Muslim style. It symbolises a manly, robust and energetic age, full of life, vigour and lofty aspiration, suggesting an endeavour to rise to even loftier heights.

Similarly during this period we find the *Dhrupad* music coming of age under the same patronage. It realised its full potentialities and attained a finished form in which strength, dignity and artistic simplicity were combined. The genius of Tansen gave it a grandeur and majestic grace in tune with the red stone edifice of the period.

After Akbar, both music and architecture took a sharp turn, entirely breaking away from the spirit and style which characterised the arts of Akbar's time. A new way of life, gay and carrying with it a love for the pleasures of life, invaded the court, and this came to be reflected in the architecture of the time. The first trace of this change is to be found in the tomb of Itmaddowla built by the Empress Noorjehan over the earthly remains of her father. The red stone of Akbar's time was replaced by the white marble and the subsequent monarchs took up the style and carried it to a greater degree of elaborateness and excellence. It was unique in its polish, refinement and grace, but it had a touch of foppishness or effeminacy which was its weakness. Further, the introduction of *pietra dura*—i.e., the inlaying of precious stones for interior decoration—produced multicoloured designs



very pleasing to the eye. The same spirit of decoration made its way into music some time later and gave rise to the *Kheyal* style. The austere design and dignified gait and sonorous beauty of *Dhrupad* was transformed into a lyric sweetness, tender, gay and agile. *Tanas*—like arabesques in buildings—came to be introduced at this time. Though at the roots they were exhibits of patterns of excitations occurring in the nervous tissues which are the physical sources of emotion their real intentions were forgotten and they came to be used merely as ornaments. It was rather a baroque period both in architecture as well as in music. Decoration and movement are the essentials of this style. It used decoration not to complete the composition but for its own sake. The early baroquists aimed at unity in their decoration but the latter ones were content to make only a harmonious composition of the self-subsisting parts, sacrificing the over-all unity of effect of the entire musical piece.

In the beginning *Tanas* (ornamentations) were used in a sequence but in course of time this sequence and unity were sacrificed along with the specific purpose which conditioned their treatment. 'Like the sculpture of the temple which is no longer of any value in itself, but only serves as a motif for ornamentation', the *Tanas* remained only to embellish the music. The artistes gave full vent to the exuberance of their inspiration and fantasy and aimed at a prodigious variety of motifs. Though it sometimes was rambling and incoherent, music, so influenced, was gorgeous and powerful in its effect.

This style was symbolic of the period. It was the characteristic expression of the socio-religious life of the people. Faith had given place to an exhibition of piety. The vigour and earnestness of the Advaita philosophy had vanished and new faiths came into vogue which were entirely emotional both at their source and in their expressions. The life of the courts and towns were colourful, gay, polished and, at the same time, shallow and theatrical. The people delighted in and made much of emotional extravaganza and sentimentalism and the same spirit invaded the realm of the arts as well. Poetry, painting, architecture and music became more and more

ornate. During the decline of the Moghul Empire this process continued at a quickened pace. When sandstone gave place to marble, brick and plaster, intricate designs and patterns, designated to tickle the fancy, became more and more popular. In music, too, this mode was reflected in the new form, the *Thumri*, which pleased the ear and touched the heart but not the soul.

This parallel development of music and architecture was not confined to the North alone. In the South these two arts took the same road of development. The temple architecture which developed there meant vast relief panels with crowded figures and repetitive motifs. One felt that the artists were not content with the mere conquering of space but revelled in filling every inch of the walls, never giving rest to the eyes but leading them on continually. Similarly the complete absence of the stress and emphasis on sonant-consonants in South Indian *Raga* music. The singing of the notes on shorter beats gives this music a seemingly perpetual motion where the ear finds no place to rest.

When we study painting and music we find that they too have taken the same line of development. As the music of this country has no use for semitones, so our painting has no use for the distinct line which divides the light and shade as in Western painting. We find a colour gradually fading, becoming lighter and lighter till it loses itself into another, thus giving expression to the surrounding whole. Though the line of demarcation between light and shade is not marked, yet one finds one portion deeper than the other. Like this, in music too there is no use of semitones but a profuse use of microtones in which the people unaccustomed to Indian music cannot discern the minute tonal variations. To them Indian music seems to be an undue lengthening of notes.

Another noteworthy feature of both sculpture and music is that the original motif is constantly repeated.

This becomes very clear when we analyse the reliefs on the various temple walls where often we find the same figure or motif repeated successively for some time until, reaching a certain climax, it is made to face quite a different one. In

music, too, we find the dominant or delaying notes repeated again and again and then suddenly placed at the side of a dissonant or a consonant.

The above discussion leads us to believe that the import of artistic expression is broadly the same in all the arts including music, differing only in the media—the architects, painters, sculptors try to express this import by depicting objects or events through the play of masses, lines, colours and textures, which music does through tones.

And 'in music alone it is possible for the artiste to appeal directly to his audience without the intervention of a medium of communication in common use for the purpose'. The architect expresses in buildings some utilitarian purpose, the poet uses words which are in our daily conversation, the painter uses the visible world and objects to express himself but the medium of music, being rather iridescent, tends to make the art of music not too expressive but highly suggestive.

Thus, though there is a close affinity between architecture and music as regards their use of motif and in the process of development, yet the connection in the case of music and painting is more intimate. They have often combined in India to produce *Raga-Ragini* pictures—a unique development in itself. A *Raga-Ragini* picture is 'a work of art in which the tune, the song, the picture, the colour, the season, the hour and the virtues are so blended as to produce a composite production'.<sup>2</sup> These pictures form an interesting supplement to *Raga* music and music is a complement to miniature Indian painting. This practice of weaving music and painting into a single composite whole provides us with a striking example of the intention claimed by the Indians for Indian art, namely, 'that of giving expression to the idea which lies behind the appearance of things—of making manifest the abstract, for it is surely ideas only and not objects, such as persons or things, that lend themselves to reproduction in two such different forms of artistic expression as music and painting.'

The student of Indian art will find that 'one of the most important elements of plastic and pictorial and even musical art is the mental intuition or vision by which anything is con-

ceived and intuited in the mind with the emotive personality of the artist. This intuition is in the nature of *Dhyana* or meditation in which the artist melts his personality in the emotive vision or intuition of the object of his representation.”

Each classical *Raga* in North India has a pen-portrait which depicts the basic elements and inherent sentiments or moods it is supposed to possess. This gives to it an innate unchangeable value, because it was realised quite early in India that any art, to be enduring, must be able to span the bridge between the human contrivance and the organic growth. About the necessity of these *Dhyana Murtis* an old Sanskrit text says, ‘*Murthi* (image), the wife of *Dharma* (the principle underlying the order in the *Cosmos* and human social structure) is form, luminous and charming. Without her the supreme spirit or the Absolute whose abode is the whole universe would be without support.’

Art expresses itself through universal images or symbols and the images and symbols in India are looked upon as deities which conjure up visions to play with the intellect and emotions, moods and aspirations of men and women and material forces and surrounding nature, directing people to an infinite joy.

The Sanskrit *Dhyana Slokas*, or couplets, are short and precise but the later Hindi poets have embroidered on them in great detail and length in the form of amorosos (*Nayakas*) and amorosas (*Nayikas*), married men and women, some of whom are chaste and firm in their love and others carrying their illicit loves, often using all their wiles and craftiness to lure their lovers.

Indian musicologists from the very ancient times have associated the seven notes of music with the seven colours—including dark green, white, black and yellow. This intimacy of colours with musical tones has been accepted by modern psychologists and physicists who have discovered that the wave-length of different colours are in the ratio of the different musical notes. From this it can easily be presumed that the effect of a particular note on the eardrum in the excitation of the motor centres is similar to its

corresponding colour on the eye. Moreover in Indian music, every note of the musical scale possesses an expression and a psychological effect of its own. This interrelation of notes with colour on the one hand and emotional expression on the other has made possible the graphic representation of *Ragas*.

The origin of this peculiar and enchanting aspect of the Indian arts, i.e. of rendering a subject for the ear into one for the eye, is clearly known but is very old. Kohala, an authority on music prior to Bharata, has referred to it. *Silparatna*, an old text on Indian art, states in clear terms that even the sound images, rhythms and tones should be stored up in the memory of the painter to be transformed into visual compositions. *Vishnudharmottara* (sixth century A.D.) mentions a type of painting of the name of *Vainika*<sup>1</sup> which suggests pictures of musical modes. This particular representation of the *Ragas* has for the first time been referred to by Somnath in his *Ragbibodha*. It must have had its origin in a period far anterior to him. Somnath explains that every melody has a *Rupa* (form). The *Rupa* of the *Raga* is revealed to our minds by the aid of tones. This form is of two kinds—the musical which is tonal and the devotional (*Devata Dehamaya Rupa*) which is the manifestation of the same.

In other words the *Raga* paintings are the personification of the moods and sentiments inherent in the *Ragas*.

The *Ragamurtis* in the form of *Dhyanas* have led the Indian mind to depict the circumstances, moods and appropriate environments in a unique blending of music and painting, in a harmonious whole. This picturisation of melodies in actual painting seems to be very correct as 'in truth only two arts' can present 'love directly—painting through the tangibility of the bodies portrayed; music through the intangibility of its tones. No other art can reach the heights of these two most perfect and sensual yet super-sensual presentation.'

The words, the particular notes of the *Raga* and their pictorial representation help in the distillation of the generic feeling that a particular *Raga* is supposed to evoke.

Take for instance the *Todi Ragini*. The *Dhyana Sloka* in

Sanskrit suggests a beautiful damsel who 'with her snow white body anointed with the paste of camphor from Kashmir and with a veena in her hands is engaged in delighting the deer of the forest.'

The deer's love of music has been a fairly familiar imagery in our literature. One writer suggests that 'the deer are listening to the music so intently, raising their ears, that the half-munched blades of corn are falling from their mouths'. How the deer's love of music was used as a trap to entice them in hunting has been graphically described by Alberuni in his famous book on India. Perhaps also it was the practice of the Toda girls of yore to keep away the deer from their corn fields by the music of the lute.

Let us for illustration take another of our melodies, the *Kanhara*, which is one of our most enchanting *Ragas* and which has been referred to in some of the ancient texts as *Karnati Ragini*. The name itself suggests that this melody must have originated in the Karnatak country. The meditative stanza on this melody reads: 'A divinely handsome person after having killed an elephant is standing on a hillock surrounded by his retinue; the bards sing in praise of his victory as the tusk of the hunted animal lying at his feet is being presented to him.' Probably this melody was originally sung by the bards at the celebration of the elephant hunt by the kings of this region, which even now abounds in elephants. It was probably the local custom that the first pair of tusks were to be presented to the king as a symbol of his powers, amidst singing and rejoicing reminding one of the rituals practised during stag hunting in the West. Perhaps the connoisseurs of music may even now discern in the melody the two sentiments of exultation of the retinue over a victory and the doleful trumpeting of the dying animal.

This ancient melody came to be influenced in the middle ages by the Krishna cult and the later painters transformed the Royal hunting scene into the killing of Gajasur (the Elephant Demon) by Krishna. Under the influence of this cult, perhaps the original *Kanhara* was also taken to refer to *Kanha*, another name for Krishna.

Thus, if we probed the legends that have gone into the making of visual images of the *Ragas*, we might be able to get a glimpse of the historical elements and original significance of many melodies—only a glimpse as the historical and ethnical elements in many cases might have been twisted, modified and dramatised to a great extent for the composition of contemplative couplets.

Thus the descriptive imagery found in the *Dhyana-murtis*, the harmony in the *Ragas* or *Raginis* and the scenic representations in the paintings, all collectively symbolise the universal sentiment of wonder and thrill, the sadness of separation and the joy of meeting which the human soul experiences.

These paintings are visualised music, each picture being an interpretation of a particular *Raga*, in form and colour. Hearing the melody the connoisseur will call to memory the *Dhyana*, or seeing the picture he will recall the melody. The practice of combining painting and music into a single composite is a very apt example of the aim of Indian art which is to give expression to the idea which lies beyond the appearance of things—to delineate the abstract. And in these paintings it is the idea, not the object, that lends itself to reproduction in two very different forms of expressions: music and painting.

Each of the Indian *Ragas* is based on a particular sentiment or mood and it is expected to evoke a particular *Rasa*. Great care is necessary to see that no other sentiment or contra-sentiment or alien mood is expressed or evoked by the *Raga*. Otherwise *Rasabhasa*, or mutilation of the *Rasa*, would result. For instance, *Raga Bhairavi* is meant to express the sentiments of quietude (*Shanta Rasa*), devotion and piety. Feelings of love, grief or fear are repugnant to it. Compositions in this *Raga* should, therefore, be sung in such a manner as to evoke *Shanta Rasa*. Compositions intended to convey a lover's separation from and longing for his sweetheart denoting sensual passion and worldly enjoyment should not be set or sung in this *Raga*. The lyric element of the musical piece and its melodic form should be set to a particular mood and feeling so as to move in a harmony, each enlivening and

embellishing the other. If the singer strikes a note which injures this harmony the result is *Rasabhasa*. To avoid this the artiste must have a thorough grasp of every shade of the mood and every tone of the note used in a *Raga* so as to keep both the ear and mind alert and attuned to the mood and mental picture of the *Raga* or *Ragini*. The *Dhyanas* were really intended to help this.

The Indian musician, like his compeers in the other fields of art, was also dominated by the twin concepts of *Bhakti*, or dedication in a religious spirit to the professed ideal, and *Yoga*, or concentration on the elusive conception of the ideal which finds expression in the *Dhyanamurtis*. *Yoga* and *Bhakti* therefore were meant for self-identification with the spirit or ideal contained in the *Dhyanas* which, when achieved, found the vividness of the final image of the *Raga*.

'It has been observed that many Indian musicians usually shut their eyes and move their hands while singing. Apart from the physical need there is another meaning in such movement. . . . The Indian musician, in a sense, is a conductor also. . . . Indian music is mainly contemplative even in its execution. So at least two contemplators, the musician and the listener, must meet. . . . Contemplation may be of various types, religious, philosophical and aesthetic. But all types tend to conform to the angelic type of each *Raga*. The attainment of *Dhyanamurti*, the angelic, the divine or the archetypal form, which can be sensed only by contemplation, is the supreme endeavour of every artist. . . . *Dhyana Slokas* depict the image, the *Dhyanamurti* in detail. The Indian musician, if he is worth anything, is constantly trying to bring up the image and unfold it before the vision of the sympathetic listener. It is the double process, invocation and evocation. The listener too should not be ignorant of the colour and substance of the image. . . . Modern listeners often fail the contemplative musician, and the effective musician is rare everywhere.'<sup>5</sup>

These *Raga-Ragini* pictures that our painters have painted in colour and line belong to two schools, viz. the Rajput and the Moghul. The output of each of these schools is characteristic in style and treatment. A good Rajput picture, apart



from having the *Dhyana Sloka* written in Hindi or Sanskrit at the top or bottom of the picture, possesses more temperament and imaginative feeling, while the Moghul version would carry with it more effective finish, balance and splendour.

This aspect of music, i.e. the representation of music in picture, was not completely unknown to the West. We come across at least one musicologist, Monk Adam of Fulda (fifteenth century), who composed various Latin verses characterising the different musical modes prevalent then 'of which visual images have been formulated—with identifying inscriptions'. Even in modern times many European painters such as Roberts Pease and Miss J. Williams have attempted to depict in picture-form the twenty-four preludes of Chopin, Bach's Concerto and Chopin's Berceuse though their output and standard falls far short of Indian artists.

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## 23. Western versus Indian Music

**W**ESTERN MUSIC is typically different from Indian music in its basic conceptions of the musical sound. Sound, as we know it, is constituted of three elements, viz., the fundamental, the evolving process of an ascensional nature and the number of secondary sounds known as overtones. It is thus not a static but a dynamic phenomenon, in which these overtones represent the various stages reached by the sonorous element in the process of its evolution moving in mathematical progression towards a pitch when it no more remains audible.

In India a note is just a centre of a musical influence or only a space covered on a continuous road of evolution. 'To ask the Indian musician to produce accurately a note-for-note, identical reproduction of any rendering is to expect something which is to him an anathema.'<sup>1</sup>

Western musicians, on the other hand, concentrate on the centre of each note of a scale; their ears will not tolerate any variation from this central point. The Eastern musicians concentrate on the gradation of pitch between the centre of each note. 'Where the Western musician strides from note to note, his Eastern brothers glide between.'

We in India never separate the notes from the evolving process; on the contrary, in some way we reintegrate them into the natural growth of the sound. The Westerners, on the other hand, isolate the notes, making them separate individualities only having an outer relationship with each other but without any vital bond. To them a note neither

has ancestors to which it can look for its source nor has any successors to which it can look for continuance of the line. The family tie between the notes is thus lacking, as it is in the family life of the West. But not so in the East. Here every being is attached to his ancestor by a thousand and one bonds and equally so to his children and thus each individual is a milestone, as it were, on the road of evolution.

A similar familial bond exists, therefore, in the concept of the musical note too. In India it is a sonorous fluid in ascension from the fundamental (ancestor) to the overtones (successors) and leading to successive octaves as from one generation to another. Notes swimming continually in a sea of sound, when brought together and arranged according to various patterns in which certain number of overtones embody a certain type of relationship, are called modes or *Raga*, each having its proper season, day and hour of performance. When so performed the *Raga* is believed to have the power to move the elements in nature, in man and in animal. Hundreds of anecdotes, some as recent as a decade or two ago, testify to this power. It is said that *Dipak Raga* which was once sung by Tansen in Akbar's Court scalded the singer badly. The last time *Megha* was sung by Ostad Zakir-ud-din Khan of Udaipur at the first music conference in Baroda in 1916, 'much to our amazement' [writes Atiya Begum who was present] 'a sudden storm brewed, the rains poured in torrents and the disturbance lasted for a couple of hours'.<sup>2</sup> The late Ustad Mohammad Ali Khan, the last descendant of Tansen, when challenged in 1928 to play *Dipak Raga* performed it on a rabab in the temple of Hanuman at Gaya, and the flames evoked by the *Dipak Raga* burnt a part of the musical instrument, which has been preserved in the temple and is still worshipped.<sup>3</sup>

These anecdotes cannot be dismissed as idle gossip or old women's tales for modern researches in sound waves have also testified to the power of a sound and its convertibility into energy. The ancient Indian texts which dealt with music in such an analytical and scientific manner, splitting and measuring sound and notes into their minutest detail, carefully

fixing their respective places and relationships, seriously asserted the physical and psychical powers of the various *Ragas*. But these are now veiled in allegories and are very difficult to unravel as we have lost the clues.

This knowledge and application of the principle of fluid note and flowing sound were not entirely unknown to the West. Indeed, it constituted the foundation of Greek music with twenty-one notes and modes, almost of Indian conception but with the difference that the Greeks changed from one tonic or fundamental note to another and thus varied the pitch of the mode. The Church mode took ancient Greek modes, though imperfectly, but later European music moved away from it by accepting the tempered scale which divides the octave into twelve equal parts and is therefore unable to produce the real music or give any idea of the minute differences of the notes which distinguish one *Raga* from another as in India. This ignorance led the Europeans gradually to reduce the number of Greek modes to two. The adoption of such an artificial base gradually changed the entire structure of European music from the sixteenth century onwards. Since the eighteenth century, however, some musicians of the West have begun to realise, at least feebly if not clearly, the drawback of their musical system. It was only in the late nineteenth century that some Western musicians began to strive unconsciously towards a more natural foothold.

The great romantic upsurge is one of the examples of this unconscious effort. The harmonic sequences of Erik Satie and Debussy were signs of this groping towards a new musical ideal, thanks to the pedal effects of the piano, which when played in a natural and direct manner is able to produce a sort of confused flow of sounds where to some extent the notes lose their individuality and become integrated into a whole. But this integration is still a shadow—a faint image of the true model of old music that is still prevalent in the East. This groping, searching and striving for the ideal still continues and will continue until such time as the Westerners are prepared to change their approach to music and reconstruct the whole musical system on the natural laws of sound.

If we go a little deeper and analyse the scale of the West, we find it to be a strange combination of the Chinese scale, built upon an ascending principle of fifths, thus bringing into existence the Chromatic scale including twelve semitones and the Indian scale built upon a series of harmonics and the progression of octaves.

But the pure Chinese and Indian systems are based upon the principle of an absolute relationship furnished by the harmonic series. Each note is related to the succeeding one in regular arithmetical progression. This relationship constitutes the one and only natural law of proportion applicable to music irrespective of the time and place of its origin and development. Such a relationship between any set of two notes is not recognised in Western music.

To the Westerners Indian music is to certain extent repetitive. It should be noted, however, that each time the inflections are a little different. To appreciate these inflections one has to be very keen and alert and have a perception greater than that for Western music.

'An Indian listener is therefore like a person who can appreciate twenty different shades of blue, and twenty different shades of red. The Westerner is accustomed to an enormous painting with yellow, green, red and every other colour which completely dazzle him and carry him away.

'Indian music requires more concentrated meditation, a more introspective element. It requires an audience to forget about time and material achievements and [calls for a] clearing of the mind. This is an attitude of mind difficult for a Westerner.'<sup>4</sup>

It is often said—and quite truly—that Indian music is melodic while European music is harmonic. The normal Western listener has really no ear for pure melody. To him music is a harmonious relationship of two concordant but independent musical notes often related to one another in varied ways and it is perhaps this idea of second dimension which makes people think of such music as a little more advanced. But the dominant feature of Indian music is the melody generated by the successive concordant notes and it would

seem that it is not prepared to sacrifice this for fear of being called archaic.

Each melody in India is cast in one definite mould and mood and variations are not allowed to alter the mood which is inherent in the *Raga*. The balance is obtained partly by the time variation and partly by the use of graces. The particular time designated for singing the *Raga*, its pictorial representation and the emotions associated with it, all these are integrated into the melody.

The salient notes of the *Ragas* are predetermined by long association and tradition and their alteration is, as a rule, not possible. The relation of the individual notes to one another is likewise settled by theory and tradition. In the West, on the other hand, the musicians create new forms as the music proceeds, impelled by the momentary lead or drive of the harmony or the counterpoint. It is the cluster of notes rather than the individual note that has a special or characteristic value.

But the music of India does not thereby become narrow or constricted, for it has evolved a greater number of note combinations than the music of the West. Carnatic music, in accepting seventy-two combinations of notes, uses nineteen while Hindustani music accepts ten. But European music accepts only three, viz., the note pattern of the *Shankarabharan*, *Keeravani* and *Gowrimanohari Ragas* corresponding to its own Major, Harmonic and Melodic Minor scales respectively.

In all systems of music the need has been felt for variety. This need in India has been satisfied to a great extent by the extraordinary development of rhythm. Variety and novelty are achieved in each *Raga* by the use of *Gamakas* or improvised musical phrases and curves of sounds. There cannot, however, be strange or alien ornaments woven into the composition as in the West but only such as fit into the integral part of the melodic structure.

Tagore has beautifully expressed the difference between the two systems of music. He says: 'In our country, the singing of the song is all important and in the song itself lies all

our difficulty; in the West on the contrary the voice production is the chief concern and with the voice they achieve the impossible. Here in India, the real audience is content with the song but in the West the audience only listens to the singing.

'European music looks towards diversity and we look for unity. In our music variegated *Tanas* flow as if from a thousand sprouts; the one is not the echo of the other but each possesses its own individuality, yet mingling and converging together to make the whole.

'Harmony expressses in tone the magnificent dance-drama of the diverse manifestation of nature. But in the centre of it there runs a melody, in the background of time and rhythm on which the dance, there, fulfils its round. Our music, on the contrary, tries to catch this central melody; the nature of the Western people is to progress in step with the eternally changing diversity, and our habit is to listen quietly but intensely to the music and calm ourselves. European music does not spring from the life of the people as it has its source outside.

'Our music thus passes beyond pleasure and pain . . . .

'It quietly opens the gate of a pleasure garden and invites the infinite among the crowd.

'Our music is one man's song, an individual's song—but not of any particular individual—but of the universal one.'<sup>5</sup>

'Western music is explosive', it excites. There is 'no scope in it for reaching the heart of the audience, whereas Indian music has all the qualities that shoot in the heart truer than Cupid's arrow.'<sup>6</sup>

As regards the effect, in European music the ecstasy seems to be logically worked up while in Indian music one is emotionally hustled. This does not mean that European music lacks emotion; precisely, it means that European music is cultured and therefore more reticent; Indian music is a little more primitive and passionate. This is of course a subjective impression. Western music does not satisfy the emotions as much as it does the intellect. The Indian musician is like an Indian philosopher who starts with the finite and 'sends his

soul into the infinite; he embroiders upon his theme until, through an undulating stream of rhythm and recurrence, even through a hypnotizing monotony of notes, he has created a kind of musical *Yoga*, a forgetfulness of will and individuality, of matter, space and time.<sup>7</sup> Listening to music is an art in India and needs a long training of the ear and the soul.

This opinion is impressionistic or rather subjective. It should, however, be stated straightway that no one people are fit to judge the nature and extent of the emotional appeal of any music other than their own. The conscious and intelligent understanding of an art is different from the spontaneous reactions elicited by it. This is true of all arts, but is particularly true in the case of music, which has nothing in Nature to hold the mirror up to, being a pure creation of the mind.

On careful analysis we find that European and Indian systems of music followed the same path till the fifteenth century. Their source was the same and their basic structure almost similar until that time. Both were based on the Pythagorean mode, which originally belonged to India. The Greeks not only attributed to India all their science of music but it is said that Alexander took Indian musicians with him. Later on they differed from each other in their structure, their trends, in the form and content in response to the needs and demands of the times. But this difference is more in body than in spirit. It is clear from a careful study of European music that Palestrina's 'Stabat Mater' and 'Improperia' and Tallis's Responses were compositions in which the voice delivers plain concords in homogeneous rhythm with no display of contrapuntal device whatever.

In the accompaniment of sarangi also, one finds an entirely different material for satisfying this craving for variety. The sarangi player is expected to follow the voice, but mostly during the pauses or even sometimes along with the song itself he plays some florid passages of his own. This kind of accompaniment was well known to the Greeks as Heterophony and they practised it methodically along with their songs to add some interest to them. What is known now as a counter-point in the West is nothing but a device to combine two or



more different melodies. The Heterophony of the Greeks is faintly suggested by the sarangi player's methods and it was therefore an anticipation of the counterpoint and its off-shoot harmony which have been developed greatly by European musicians.

It is well known that Western music began to lean more on harmony in the fifteenth century and 'it is also well known that the choral harmony even of the sixteenth century was a texture woven out of distinct strands of melodic value. On the other hand, it should be equally known that Indian instrumental music possesses a number of harmonic and contrapuntal devices which no good player fails to demonstrate after the main theme is fully established. Therefore, the difference between Indian and European music is not a matter of Melody vs. Harmony, but one of emphasis.'

In the Middle Ages, Western music—which was mainly Church music—was solemn, quiet and introspective. So was the *Dhrupad* of India. Then Western music became the court music in which the dominant note was courtesy and elegance. The same may be said of the *Kheyal* to a great extent. Later Western music became the music of the common man, light, agile and gay, and so did the Indian *Thumri*. When this trend became almost too common there came in the West the impressionist music whose prototype here is the so-called modern music.

The gypsies who were originally of India introduced many things musical into Arabia and Europe. Many twists and turns which are wholly Eastern, along with many Indian tunes, are found in the gypsy music of Europe. The gypsies of Spain sing a tune, *Indiana*, which is similar to our *Bhairavi*. Again the Hungarian gypsies have a tune similar to *Simhendramadhyam* of Carnatic music. The instrument with the fretted keyboard was introduced by gypsies into Arabia whence it travelled to the West. This helped the Westerners to evolve the present Major scale.

In the West the voice and instrument either co-operate or compete with each other. But in Indian music the instrument is subordinated to the voice. 'Dancing follows the instruments

and the instruments follow the voice,' says an Indian text. The texture of Indian music is vocal. The instrument is only an accompaniment meant to follow the voice but not to lead it. This cannot be said of Western music. The composers there need to test their compositions on their instruments and their music needs the support of instruments to bring out its full scope. The tunes and airs are thought out in terms of the notes of musical instruments and worked out on them. They are likewise best played or rendered on the instruments.

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## 24. Music of Books and out of Books

THE MOST REMARKABLE fact about Indian musical literature is that books on music came to be written only when it was found that musical practices and usages had strayed away from their old footholds and found new moorings. In this process music had acquired new ways and means of expression. This process being slow and long, the old and new practices often continued side by side for some time until one day the old either disappeared or changed its meaning completely, thus leaving the new method and conception to hold the field. The people of the time were often oblivious to or unconscious of the change that was taking place, but later there appeared a gap between the theory and practice of music which made it difficult for the new generation to understand the prevailing music in the context of the old one. It was at this time that the scholars came forward to bridge the gap, thus providing the genesis of musical literature.

After Matanga's *Brihaddesi* (second century A.D.) the most important book on Indian music is *Sangeeta Makaranda* by Narada II, of the seventh century A.D. In this book, as we said earlier, one finds for the first time the *Ragas* classified as masculine, feminine and neuter, which later inspired the musicians of North India to classify their melodies likewise. Narada II also improved upon the assignation of time to the *Ragas* hinted by Matanga. Though the book has now become completely archaic we find in it the seeds of the later development of Hindustani music.

By the eighth and ninth centuries, the Muslims had started

coming to India as occasional plunderers and some of them conquered Sind and settled down there to rule the country. By the tenth century the political condition in India had become chaotic and there must have been a decline in the practice of music as no art can thrive in chaos.

In the thirteenth century Sarangadeva must have felt the need for linking up music of the past with the prevailing one and set about to write his *Sangeeta Ratnakara* which is a book of considerable importance. But the book has become a subject of controversy as many technical terms used therein are incomprehensible both to the Hindustani and Carnatic music scholars.

In the north-eastern region of the country which was less frequently invaded by the Muslims there prevailed comparative peace. This region developed a music tradition of its own which is somewhat different in detail from the common northern one. The basis of this eastern source seems to be *Sangeeta Damodara* written between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries by one Subhankara. It is by far the most important and comprehensive work on music after *Ratnakara* and deals elaborately with every aspect of the theory of expression and the musical technique. It still remains to some extent an undisputed authority of the music prevalent in the eastern part of India beyond Bihar—which in many details even now differs somewhat from the music of the rest of India. 'It is remarkable that both in construction and in the style of singing an Assamese *Raga* differs very strikingly from the style of the same *Raga* in north Indian music as it would also from the Carnatic style,' writes a student of Assamese music. Even the style of singing and interpretation of the *Ragas* in Bengal are markedly different from the main north Indian stream.

When the Muslims settled down in India, they were not much in favour of music as Islam forbade it. But the Sufis and Dervishes had taken to it seriously. During the rule of Altamash (A.D. 1210-1236) the question whether music was permitted by Islam came to the fore and the King sought the opinion of Muslim divines who ruled that it was 'unlawful for

the dialecticians but lawful for the devotees'. This resolved the controversy and the future of music was assured under the Muslim rulers. After this we find almost every Muslim ruler except Aurangzeb patronising the art of music, though the science of it was the secret of the Brahmin scholars, held in the cloisters and dying with them in neglect.

Between the twelfth and the seventeenth century we do not find any valuable book on music; if at all there was any it must have been a victim of incendiarism or plunder committed by barbarian hordes.

Under the influence of the Muslims the north Indian musical stream separated from the main Indian one and took a different course, making itself distinct from its main Hindu source. This latter, in an attempt to preserve its identity, took shelter in the south of the country where it became involved with the current folk music of Dravidian origin and thus completed not only the bifurcation of Indian music but the extinction of Aryan music, if there was any.

The earliest work on north Indian music after the bifurcation is perhaps Lochana's *Rajatarangini* written after the fourteenth century, because the author quotes profusely from Vidyapati, 'the bard of Mithila' who flourished some time in the latter half of the fourteenth century.

Like his predecessors Lochana recognises twenty-two *Shrutis* and in regard to their distribution in the scale follows Bharata and other earlier writers. His *Shuddha* (unmodified) scale is the modern *Kafi Thata*. He lays down 12 *Janaka Ragas* and classifies the 76 *Janya Ragas* as in Table 4.

*Tarangini* is a very important work so far as Hindustani music is concerned as the *Swaras* and *Ragas* of Lochana are purely Northern. His *Raga* descriptions (*Lakshanas*) are valid even to this day to a great extent and many Bengal variations of north Indian music agree *in toto* with the *Ragas* of Lochana. Many Muslim innovations also find a place in his book.

The next book of considerable importance on Hindustani music is Hridayanarayan's *Hridayakautuka* and *Hridayaprakasha*. According to Dr. Sukthankar, this scholar lived in Gowda Desa, the northern part of Bengal, around A.D. 1660.

TABLE 5

No. Karta	Janyas or Derivatives
1. Bhairavi	1. Bhairavi, 2. Neelambari
2. Todi	1. Todi
3. Gowri	1. Malava, 2. Sri Gowri, 3. Cheti Gowri, 4. Pahadee Gowri, 5. Desi Todi, 6. Desakri, 7. Gowdi, 8. Trivana, 9. Multani, 10. Dhanasree, 11. Vasanta, 12. Bhairava, 13. Vibhasa, 14. Ramakali, 15. Gurjari, 16. Bahuli, 17. Reva, 18. Bhatiyar, 19. Khata, 20. Malavapanchama, 21. Jayantasree, 22. Asavari, 23. Devagandhara, 24. Sindhee Asavari, 25. Gunakari
4. Karnata	1. Karnata, 2. Vagesvari, 3. Khama-mach, 4. Sorat, 5. Paraj, 6. Maru, 7. Jayajayavanti, 8. Kukubha, 9. Kamoda, 10. Kedara, 11. Malavakaisika, 12. Hindola, 13. Sughrayee, 14. Adana, 15. Garakanada, 16. Sri Raga
5. Kedara	1. Kedaranata, 2. Abhiranata, 3. Khambavati, 4. Sankarabharana, 5. Bihagra, 6. Hammira, 7. Syama, 8. Chayanata, 9. Bhupali, 10. Bhimpalasi, 11. Kausika, 12. Maru
6. Iman	1. Iman, 2. Shuddhakalyan, 3. Puriya, 4. Jayatkalyan
7. Saranga	1. Saranga, 2. Patamanjari, 3. Brindravani, 4. Samantasaranga, 5. Badahamsa
8. Megha	1. Meghamallar, 2. Gowdasaranga, 3. Bilawal, 4. Alhaiya, 5. Shuddha Suha, 6. Desh and 7. Shuddhanata
9. Dhanasri	1. Dhanasri, 2. Lalita
10. Purva	1. Purva
11. Mukhari	1. Mukhari
12. Deepaka	Nil

He fixed the note-places in terms of the lengths of the sounding strings of veena thus stressing their mathematical accuracy. According to him any *Shuddha Swara*, when it leaves its own place and rises up by one or more *Shrutis*, becomes *Tivra*, *Tivratara* and *Tivratama* respectively. His scale is that of Lochana with an addition of two notes, viz., *Trisruti Ma* and *Trisruti Ni* but in other respects he follows his predecessors.

His *Mela Ragas* are *Bhairavi*, *Karnati*, *Mukhari*, *Todi*, *Iman*, *Megha*, *Hridayarama* (his own creation), *Gowri*, *Saranga*, *Purva* and *Dhanashri* under which he places their *Janyaragas*. He describes the *Ragas* with their *Arohana-Avarohana*.

The *Sangeet Parijata* of Ahobala, written in the latter half of the seventeenth century, is another among the most important books on Hindustani music. It seems Ahobala was a southern scholar (some of the *Ragas* referred to by him are Carnatic) but his book is on the north Indian system.

As regards *Shrutis* he follows such ancient writers as Bharata and others. He gives each of his note two names but uses only twelve when describing a scale. This practice of calling the notes by two names or more seems to have been a common practice in ancient and medieval times.

With regard to the distribution of modified and unmodified notes in this scale he follows Hridayarrayan's wire-length method. His *Shuddha* scale is thus the modern *Kafi* scale of the north.

The other books that are of any importance are *Sadragachandrodaya*, *Ragmala* and *Ragamanjari* written by one Pundarik Vittal. He was also a southern scholar who after many trials took service under Maharaja Madho Singh, the ruling prince of Ambar (now called Jaipur). His first book *Sadragachandrodaya* was written when he was in the service of Buhran Khan, ruler of Khandesh; and the other two books at Ambar (A. D. 1576).

He recognises 22 *Shrutis*, seven *Shuddha* and an equal number of *Vikrit* notes. With regard to the tuning of the veena, his is the method practised even today. He speaks of 19 *Mela Ragas* with their *Janyaragas* as in Table 6.

TABLE 6

No. *Janaka or  
Meia Ragas*

*Janya or Derivative Ragas*

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>Mukhari</i>          | 1. <i>Mukhari</i>  |
| 2. <i>Malavagowda</i>      | 1. <i>Malava</i> , 2. <i>Goundakriti</i> , 3. <i>Gur-jari</i> , 4. <i>Takka</i> , 5. <i>Padi</i> , 6. <i>Karanji</i> , 7. <i>Bahuli</i> , 8. <i>Purvi</i> , 9. <i>Ramakri</i> , 10. <i>Dravida Gowda</i> , 11. <i>Gowdi</i> , 12. <i>Ban-gala</i> , 13. <i>Asavari</i> , 14. <i>Panchama</i> , 15. <i>Revagupti</i> , 16. <i>Prathama Manjari</i> , 17. <i>Karnata Bangala</i> , 18. <i>Shuddha Lalita</i> , 19. <i>Shuddha Gowda</i> , 20. <i>Devagandhara</i> , 21. <i>Marva</i> |
| 3. <i>Sri Raga</i>         | 1. <i>Sri Raga</i> , 2. <i>Malavasri</i> , 3. <i>Dhana-sri</i> , 4. <i>Bhairavi</i> , 5. <i>Saindhavi</i>  |
| 4. <i>Shuddha Nata</i>     | 1. <i>Shuddha Nata</i>   |
| 5. <i>Desakshi</i>         | 1. <i>Desakshi</i>   |
| 6. <i>Karnata Gowda</i>    | 1. <i>Karnata</i> , 2. <i>Turushka Todi</i> , 3. <i>Shuddha Bangala</i> , 4. <i>Chaya Nata</i> , 5. <i>Samanta</i>   |
| 7. <i>Kedara</i>           | 1. <i>Kedara</i> , 2. <i>Narayana Gowda</i> , 3. <i>Velavali</i> , 4. <i>Sankarabharana</i> , 5. <i>Natanarayana</i> , 6. <i>Madhyamadi</i> , 7. <i>Mallara</i> , 8. <i>Gowda</i> , 9. <i>Saranga Nata</i> , 10. <i>Bhupali</i> , 11. <i>Saveri</i> , 12. <i>Sowrash-tri</i> , 13. <i>Kambhoji</i>   |
| 8. <i>Hijj</i>             | 1. <i>Hijj</i>   |
| 9. <i>Hamiranata</i>       | 1. <i>Hamiranata</i>   |
| 10. <i>Kamoda</i>          | 1. <i>Kamoda</i>   |
| 11. <i>Todi</i>            | 1. <i>Todi</i>   |
| 12. <i>Abhiri</i>          | 1. <i>Abhiri</i>   |
| 13. <i>Shuddha Varali</i>  | 1. <i>Shuddha Varali</i> , 2. <i>Sama Varali</i>   |
| 14. <i>Shuddha Ramakri</i> | 1. <i>Shuddha Ramakri</i> , 2. <i>Triveni</i> , 3. <i>Desi</i> , 4. <i>Lalitha</i>   |
| 15. <i>Devakri</i>         | 1. <i>Devakri</i>  |
| 16. <i>Saranga</i>         | 1. <i>Saranga</i>  |
| 17. <i>Kalyana</i>         | 1. <i>Kalyana</i>  |
| 18. <i>Hindola</i>         | 1. <i>Hindola</i>  |
| 19. <i>Nadaramakri</i>     | 1. <i>Nadaramakri</i>  |



He was fully aware of the practice of the north Indian musicians which enabled him to express the *Ragas* in terms of twelve notes only.

In *Ragamala* he goes back to the unmodified scale of the Carnatic music and his modified notes here depart from his previous standpoint. Here he uses 14 notes to describe his *Ragas*.

The *Ragas* mentioned and described by him in this book are current to some extent even today. He has given the notes of the *Ragas*, their *Dhyanas* and their appropriate times.

In the *Ragamanjari* too his scale is Carnatic. In this book he confines his *Ragas* only to *Shadajagrama* and lays down 20 *Melaras*. He also describes some Persian *Ragas* which had perhaps by this time found a permanent niche in the Hindustani system.

The greatest achievement of this man is that, being a person versed in the southern style of music, he studied northern Indian music with a rare understanding and somewhat successfully systematised the music of north India which found itself chaotic. His veena was tuned to *Sa*, *Pa*, and *Sa*, *Ma* and had only 12 frets. His works help us considerably to understand both the southern and northern styles of music.

The next series of works belongs to one Bhavabhata who in the beginning was in the service of the Emperor Shah Jahan and who joined the service of Maharaja Anup Singh of Bikaner (A. D. 1674-1709) when Aurangzeb ascended the Delhi throne.

He also is of South Indian stock. All his books are rather compilations from the works of the authors who preceded him. For his *Anup Sangeet Vilas* he gathered material from *Sangeeta Ratnakara*; and so is the case with his *Anup Sangeet Ratnakar*. In the *Raga Adhyay* ('Chapter on Raga') of this book he incorporates the *Raga* classification of *Ragamanjari* of Pundarik Vittal. In his *Anup Ankush*, he follows the *Sangeet Darpana* of Damodara; for his definition of *Ragas* he quotes *Sangeet Parijata*, *Hrdya Prakasha* and *Raga Manjari*—which often leads him to contradict himself. His only contribution is that he tried to systematise the music of

North India at a time when it was drifting.

By the end of the eighteenth century political conditions in India were again in disorder and the native rulers who were patrons of music either fell a prey to foreign machinations or were busy with internecine quarrels and left music without their powerful support. Outstanding musical scholarship was wanting but it was supplied to some extent by the scholars who were patronised by the petty chiefs. The performers, being mostly Muslims, were unable to read the Sanskrit texts but kept in touch with the Hindu scholars of the court who introduced them to the world of thought where the *Raga* deities lived. A few books based on Sanskrit texts had come to be translated into Persian which guided the Muslim performers and thus they were not altogether ignorant of the fundamentals of music.

By their own efforts and from practice some of these Muslim musicians became very noted performers of the art. They were not satisfied merely with giving only the correct interpretations of the *Ragas* following the old theory but they occasionally endowed their interpretations with an inner joy, passion, sometimes by modifying a note here and at other times by emphasising a note there or by adding new graces. These creations on the one hand expressed the *Raga* ideally conceived and mentally intuited, thus preserving the real significance inherent in them, and on the other hand added colour, thought and the personality of the artistes, relieving them of monotony. These came to be known as *Gharwanas* or schools of interpretations.

But recently these *Gharwanas* have been criticised by Hindu revivalists who brand them as misinterpretations. But while criticising these schools it should be borne in mind that *Ragas* whose very basis is sound can never be rigid and static. Those who study the available texts on music assiduously would find that *Ragas* have been changing every half a century or so. Moreover, like all the other arts music too is 'vision and expression', and is essentially an intuitive contemplation, 'the whole process up to the point of creation belonging to the established order of personal devotions in which the worship

is paid to the images mentally conceived'. The mental flow which is the source of all creation differs from man to man and the conception even of the same subject is bound to vary as the creators (not imitators) bring to their work diverse attitudes. Moreover, the artist as a creator, if he is worth anything, has the liberty to modify the universe of nature as it appeals to his emotions and ideals. Thus not the *Raga* alone but also the mental intuition in the meditative impulse of the artist is a very important element in the creative process, the principal contribution of the *Raga* being the suggestion inherent in it. This latter excites the artistic intuition and once roused it takes its own path and follows its own inner laws regardless of realities. The ancients knew that emotion is not a fixed conception. For this reason they named each of the different stages of music in a state of movement.

Any kind of creation in music is satisfactory as long as the inner meaning of the *Ragas* in relation to their spirit is maintained as the canons of Indian art allow the ignoring of the external and objective nature but not the message of the subject which is imbedded in the *Dhyanas* of the *Ragas*. The *Raga* structures are only the external expressions of the psychological ideas, moods and longings of man and of the mysterious ever-changing nature herself. Thus the *Ragas* are ever-expanding ideas which can neither be limited by the static scaffoldings of mere ascents and descents nor be made to limp on the crutches of rigid *Vadi-Samvadi* schemes.

'It is important to note that our masters laid greater emphasis on music rather than on the way of expression. At no time in the past did we have any common authority governing the interpretations of different styles of music whether on instruments or in vocal singing. This is in sharp contrast to what obtains in the West, where uniform standards are laid down for the interpretations of the styles of music on different musical instruments and for different types of voices. In the case of the violin, for instance, every aspect of playing the instrument—from its shape and size, bowing and fingering actions down to sound production and actual composition—is

governed by a set of rules implicitly accepted and respected by all stylists alike. This has never been the case with Indian musical tradition.'

These *Gharwanas*, or styles of interpretation, are not confined to the north only but are also current in the south where they are known by the name of *Sampradayas* (traditional practices).

## 25. Music Looks Back

LIKE ALL OTHER arts music also is dominated by two tendencies, viz., realistic or naturalistic and the romantic or idealistic, at one time or the other, though sometimes both these run concurrently. In north Indian music *Dhrupad* and *Hori Dhamar* belong to this former class. Their only aim is to present the *Raga* in its purest form and that is why there is a concentration on what is absolutely essential, omitting all that is superfluous or accidental, however charming and delightful it may be.

Romantic or idealistic art is not satisfied with a mere expression of the rigid form of the subject. It tries to make the expression highly emotional either by emphasising or colouring a part of it, or by elaborating or syncopating it. Here the artist has full opportunity to use his imagination, his powers of expression and colour schemes in his own way. He brings his moods and passions into full play to achieve this end. Realistic art discovers what has been left unexpressed in the subject concerned, whereas romantic art invents it. The *Kheyal* and *Thumri* of north Indian music are good examples of this latter tendency.

'The classic achieves greatness by restraint and simplicity, while the romantic weaves an elaborate fabric of fact and fancy to make the effect more charming. The former appeals through beauty to the intellect; the latter through richness of colour and drama to the senses and the imagination.'

Too much stress or emphasis on technique robs art of its capacity to please and delight the common people. That is

why music in its purest form can satisfy only a very select group of critical connoisseurs. On the other hand, the imaginative addition of colour and emotion to music appeals to a much larger circle of listeners. That is why we find *Kheyal* and *Thumri* having more adherents than *Dhrupad* or *Hori*.

Historians of art are of the opinion that style in art form is not a static but a dynamic phenomenon related to and changing with the different periods of cultural development. Art styles differ in different centuries or in the same country at different periods. They depend on the taste of the people, which is conditioned by age, climate, environment and the social milieu.

Any one familiar with the history of literary art knows well that changes in style are more than mere expressions of a new sense of form. They are symptoms of a change in the socially approved pattern of personality.

This is true of music also. We have seen how from a modest beginning in the *Saman* chants in which 'the strangeness of sound alone exercised an aesthetic charm', the genius of the people has evolved *Dhrupad* music which forms the basis of the present art music of north India.

Like most musical art forms *Dhrupad* too was a regional style. According to *Ain-i-Akbari* this music was sung by the people of different regions in different styles and under different names for their own pleasure. The *Prabandha* form which was the immediate predecessor of *Dhrupad* was conceived on an epic scale. It was sung at great length and according to an elaborate plan comprising several sections such as *Akshiptika*, *Vidari*, *Sthayi*, *Ragavardhini* etc. Also the very conception of *Raga* was aesthetically much more elaborate than the bare *Aroha-Avarohana* idea now familiar. *Graha*, *Amsa*, *Tara*, *Mandra*, *Nyasa*, *Alpatwa*, *Bahulatva*, etc. were essential factors in delineating a *Raga*. But in the context of changed times and tastes this elaborate structure gradually ceased to please the people. Numerous *Raga* forms came into existence during the Muslim period and there was a sort of anarchy in the world of music. It was at this period that Man Toomar, King of Gwalior (1470), his wife Rani

Mriganayani and their Court musician Bakshu, took up the folk music of their time, chastened it, and developed it into the art music of north India. It was this triumvirate that laid down the basis for that magnificent musical form *Dhrupad* which was later developed and perfected by Tansen.

*Dhrupad* possesses tonal richness in full measure but lacks ornamental detail. Its gait is majestic but its pace is slow. It presents the *Raga* in its purest form and in an unsophisticated manner. Here 'we are led to an understanding of musical art in one of its most elementary forms and the elementary is always the vital.' Why is it so? 'Partly because it is deeply inspired by religious ideas and spiritual experience and partly because it is entirely self-conscious as an art; there are no tricks which can be acquired by the unworthy, and no technical exercises which can masquerade as works of inspiration.'<sup>1</sup>

We can call *Dhrupad* music 'primitive' since 'its massive form and austere outline are immediately determined by the moral grandeur of the thesis and the suppressed emotion of its realisation, without any intrusion of individuality or parade of skill. It has a high degree of vitality without showing the conscious elegance and suavity.'<sup>2</sup>

Even the subject-matter of *Dhrupad* compositions, as we have seen, are either chants in praise of gods and goddesses or prayers to them for mercy.

In them the moderate use of tones dims the *Raga* colour to a certain extent and yet we find this form of music highly impressive. The frugal use of tones reveals their inherent significance. It is music with the utmost economy of colour, yet it is deep in its suggestion conjuring with a few notes a rare image of moods and passions. Here one finds 'not what gratifies in sensation but merely what pleases by its form'. The ancient masters did not rest with the presentation of a beautiful form but endeavoured hard to project into it the strivings of their innermost experience and consciousness which made their creations a reflection of their personalities. They revealed a glimpse of the reality as comprehended by them and the experience of their own souls.

*Dhrupad* enjoyed unrivalled supremacy for over 200 years. Then it began to lose its ground and has now lost so much of it that it is seldom heard today. A critic who had listened to the masters of 20 years ago has said, 'The *Dhrupad* style of music is becoming a rare acquisition. May God bless the living exponents of this art with long life, for there is no doubt that when these artistes pass away they will leave a void in Indian art which it will be impossible to fill.'<sup>3</sup> And this has come true.

The purity of thought, the depth of its content, the discipline of strict rules, the powerful voice necessary for rendering the *Dhrupad* have all become well nigh impossible in a society lacking stability, religious faith and contentment. Once a vital art, it has now become a tradition on its last legs and may soon become a mere memory.

*Hori Dhamar* was also once a folk style of Mathura and its environs. When *Kheyal*, the creation of the romantics, was making inroads into the musical world and was trying to displace the traditional *Dhrupad* from its courtly position the maestros introduced *Dhamar* to counter the influence of the *Kheyal*. In this type too there is no room for unnecessary details. But though ornamentation is allowed to a very limited extent, its charm consists in the particular rhythm which gives it a characteristic movement and swing. If the *Dhrupad* is slow and majestic like the elephant, the *Dhamar* is swift and serpentine.

Another cause for the gradual fading away of the *Dhrupad* and *Dhamar* is that in their hey-day both these types of music were *Svarapradhan*, or dominated by melody, which forced the singer to concentrate on the tonal outline and movement and graces. But later they tended to become *Layapradhan*, or dominated by rhythm, which led to rhythmic acrobatics. The result was that they degenerated into a game of vocal gymnastics and mathematical permutations. They lost all the charm and appeal that once gained them popularity and patronage.

With the advent of the Muslims, commenced a process of synthesising the Hindu and Muslim cultures. Amir Khusru gave



an impetus to this synthetic experimentation of Indian and Persian music. He was not only a great poet but a versatile man who could discuss with equal felicity the beauty of Persian poetry as well as the subtleties of Indian and Persian music. Once questioned about his competence to discuss music he is said to have replied that he was perfect in both poetry and music and had practised and cultivated both with so much care that he, a composer of three volumes of poetry, could write another three volumes on music too, if necessary. In his opinion 'Indian music, the fire that burns the heart and soul, is superior to the music of any other country. Foreigners even after a stay of thirty or forty years in India cannot play a single Indian tune correctly.'<sup>4</sup> He was quite familiar with the Persian system and knew all its intricacies.

It was he who replaced the original classification of the Indian melodies, viz., six *Ragas* and thirty-six *Raginis*, by twenty-two *Mokams*, or houses, very similar to the *Thats* which came to be the basis of the *Qawali* system which is still prevalent and held in high esteem in India. *Qawali* is a Muslim attempt to adopt the Hindu *Bhajan* or devotional songs in Persian style set to *Qawali Tala* from which this style of music derives its name. 'The style is distinguished by its quick and lengthy passages up and down the scale and its well punctuated choruses emphasising the main theme of the song.'

Later the religious content of the songs was substituted by love themes in the Hindi dialect and began to be sung in other smaller time-measures, which came to be known as *Lavni* from which later *Kheyals* were derived.

Khusru Indianised many Persian tunes but never tried to Persianize Indian music, as he considered himself an Indian and was proud to be so.

His contribution to the music of this country is rich, varied and immense. He created many new *Ragas* and 're-created' some of the current ones. *Yaman Kalyan* is one of his masterly creations. It is the evening counterpart of the early morning *Bhairavi*. It was recreated on the basis of the old *Kalyan Raga* with a touch of *Yaman* but has become so popular that

it has thrust its parent *Raga* almost into the background. It was believed originally to be a Persian importation. Al-Yaman, we are told, was a famous centre of musical culture in Arabia in the twelfth century A. D.; and the tune perhaps most common and current there, when brought to India, was found either to be very similar to an Indian theme or to be a more enchanting one and was absorbed in the Indian *Raga* scheme. Its name indicates direct or indirect connection with Yaman.

Khusru also created other *Ragas* such as *Kafi*, *Zeelaf*, *Bahar*, *Sazgiri*. Of these *Kafi* is highly suitable for use on the stringed instruments, especially the sitar. Incidentally, it was he who popularised this instrument. He also created many other *Ragas* by crossing the Persian and Indian melodies, but they have become obsolete now.

Some critics are of the opinion that these creations of Amir Khusru are really indigenous *Ragas* with a mere change of names. But this is not correct. Even as it is possible for the connoisseur to recognise different influences in architecture, however thoroughly the motifs may have been put together, so is it possible for a discerning musician conversant with the structure of the Indian *Ragas* to discover their native motifs and recognise alien influences in them. Hindu *Ragas* usually do not lend themselves to crossing with others easily. The Muslim innovations, on the other hand, possess flexibility and adaptability for change. Take *Bahar* and *Kafi*, for instance; how easily they lend themselves to mixing with other *Ragas* and how many varieties have been created out of them!

Emperor Allauddin Khilji, the patron of Khusru, took great interest in music and it is said that after his invasion of the South and Bengal he brought with him many musicians from those regions and settled them in Delhi. Similar was the patronage of King Adil Shah of Bijapur and the famous warrior queen, Chand Bibi of Ahmednagar, who were not only great lovers of music but were composers of the front rank. Factors such as these broke down the exclusive spirit of the original Hindu music and paved the way for its expansion in new directions.

A real fusion of Indo-Muslim culture could not be achieved in the Afghan period due to the orthodox outlook of the Hindus and the iconoclastic attitude of the foreigners, which prevented their free intermingling in social and political life. By the end of the Pathan rule this narrow outlook began to give way to newer modes of thought. With the arrival of the Moghuls a new epoch opened in India. The Moghuls were more liberal and broad-minded than the Pathans and when they settled down to rule the country the Indians took them as one of their own and 'seldom in the history of mankind has the spectacle been witnessed of two civilisations so vast and so strongly developed, yet so radically dissimilar as the Muhammedan and Hindu, meeting and mingling together. The very contrasts which existed between them, the wide divergencies in their cultures and their religions, make the history of their impact peculiarly instructive and lend an added interest to all the arts and above all to music and architecture which their united genius called into being. As a result of this we find that Hindu music, instead of following a parochial or narrow line, as might have been expected, now exhibits, on the contrary, precisely the same fusion of Hindu and Muslim ideals, the same happy blend of elegance and strength which characterise north Indian art. Music remained neither Hindu nor Muslim but became Indian in both body and soul.'<sup>5</sup>

All the Moghul rulers, from Humayun to the last ill-fated Emperor Bahadur Shah, were great lovers of music, the latter being an artist of great skill and renown. Even the puritan Aurangzeb, whom popular legend paints as a man who banned music, was, if we are to believe the famous historian Saqi Mushtaq Khan, only indifferent to it. Asked whether there was any religious sanction for the practice of music, he is said to have replied, 'It is neither permitted nor prohibited by Islam. Its practice is neither sinful nor meritorious. It is an independent action by itself beyond good and evil.'

Muslim contribution to Indian music is immense and still remains to be fully assessed. Roughly it can be said that it was due to this influence that the northern Indian basic *Thata* was changed to suit the needs of the times. Secondly, many

Persian and Arabic tunes, viz. *Huseini*, *Zangula*, *Hezaj*, *Nowroz*, and *Shahana* were cast in the Indian mould and many new *Ragas* were added to the Indian musical lore. Intermixture of the Persian style and the Indian *Raga* necessitated the creation of a new style of singing which later came to be known as *Durbari* ('of the court'). Thus, 'we find two themes, masculine and feminine, Hindu and Mohammedan, about which the tonal symphony revolves. As in most of the famous symphonies, the startling hammer-strokes of opening bars are shortly followed by a strain of infinite delicacy.' So we find the overpowering *Dhrupad* creations of Hindu genius were followed by *Kheyals* illuminated by the grace and melody of the Mohammedan style. The Muslim importations did not supersede the national music; engrafted upon the Indian root they only gave it a new character.

It was at this time that the shakes and trills on particular notes were introduced in certain *Ragas*, viz. *Kanhara* and *Mallar*, which endowed them with new personalities and charm.

The revival of the *Bhakti* cult along with its emphasis on the regional dialects led to a blossoming of the regional styles of music which ultimately gave a new impetus to Indian music as a whole.

'This period of Indian music has great similarity with the development of European music from the last quarter of the fifteenth to the first quarter of the sixteenth century. But there was one difference and that was in the character and impact of the Renaissance in the two zones. The change came in India in the shape of the *Bhakti* cult which had as much of a socially revolutionary content as religious while in Europe the change and development was the result of the influence of the protestant and national movements. Nonconformity, humanism, princely patronage, were the common factors in both.'<sup>6</sup> By absorbing many indigenous tunes and motifs Indian music became richer and broad-based.

The adoption of the Major scale of C, known in India as the *Shuddha* or *Bilaval* scale, marks another improvement. It is not known when this scale was actually adopted as the basic scale

in the north, but for the first time we find a reference to it in *Sangeet Sara* written under the patronage of Maharaja Pratap Singh Deva of Jaipur (A. D. 1779-1804). It was finally adopted at the instance of one Mohammad Reza, a nobleman of Patna, who in A. D. 1813 wrote a book on music, *Naghmat-I-Asphi*. Music about this time seems to have again passed into a chaotic state and different schools of thought, viz. *Bharata Mata*, *Hanuman Mata*, *Kallinath Mata* and *Somesvara Mata*, were creating conflicts. Mohammad Reza pronounced them all out of date and placed music on a scientific basis introducing an intelligent principle into the spirit and practice of music.

Though the starting point of the musical scale differed in different periods, *Shadaja* was recognised as the tonic from very ancient times. Dattila, the great authority of music who preceded Bharata, explains that the *Shadaja* may be established at will at any pitch and that in relation with it other notes should be established at proper intervals. With experience it was found that a common tonic was necessary not only to build up the *Ragas* but also for comparing them with each other and thus the modern scale of C came to be accepted and finally established in the eighteenth century.

Taking C as tonic, the white keys of all the keyed instruments approximately give the major or *Shuddha* scale of the Indian music, thus making it easier to visualise the other modes. The vocalists in India, however, very often choose B Flat (*Ni Komal*) as their tonic but this makes no real difference. Once the intrinsic nature of the mode is properly grasped (which the recognition of C as tonic makes easier) the other modes can easily be transposed into any pitch that is suitable to the different voices and instruments.

The sitar which resembles the Persian Ud in shape and the Indian veena in principle is itself an epitome of the Indo-Muslim musical synthesis. It was, however, during this time that some musical instruments such as the veena separated permanently from vocal music and the rival schools of instrumentalists began to spring up.

In Indian music it was the vocal performers who always

dominated the field as their art fundamentally differed from that of instrumentalists in the matter of fixing scales. The latter, due to their adherence to the frets and keys of their instruments, were often exposed to minor errors. On the contrary the vocalists based their judgment on the harmony generated by the drone of the tambura and never lost their tonality. And, as it needed no conscious effort on their part to fix it, it soon deprived the majority of the vocalists of the art of tuning. But this was not so with the players of the veena or other instruments. Possession of this knowledge of tuning set up a rivalry between the Binkars who knew the art of instrumentation and the vocalists who had forgotten it. This soon gave cause for rivalry and permanent separation between vocal and instrumental music and the playing of the stringed instruments as a separate art.

Tansen was an outstanding force in the music of India. He found Indian music an uncharted ocean of *Ragas* and *Raginis*, which in his time numbered nearly 4,000. He examined each of them, analysed them and found many of them either repetitions of the main melodies or mere spurious creations without any scientific basis. He discarded the bulk of them and retained only 400. It was he who perfected the Indo-Muslim synthetic style of singing which later on was accepted as among the best and came to be known as *Durbari*. He created many new melodies. He and his descendants have contributed immensely to the art. Theirs has been the music of India for the last three centuries; it still continues to be so to a great extent.

In the post-Tansen period new musical ideas began to take shape and seek an outlet. A handful of artistes headed by Sadarang and his son Adarang, descendants of Tansen, were great pioneers. By the time of Sadarang the *Dhrupad*, which was the musical style of the courts, had lost all its original vigour and freshness. Having lost touch with the common people it became ostentatious and sterile, devoid of any charm. It became a slave to formalism and the fads of the court degraded it into an exhibition of vocal gymnastics and musical acrobatics. It was against this type of music that

Sadarang raised his voice. 'The long and elaborate history of all the arts everywhere has been the story of the young artistes in revolt against the traditions established by their elders, and predecessors, from which rebellion further tradition is developed to add to that already practised.'

About five centuries earlier Amir Khusru had tried to publicise the folk songs of Khairatabad district as *Kheyal*. But he could not make much headway. A century or so later Sultan Hossain Shirqui, the ruler of Jaunpur (15th century), again strove to revive the *Kheyal* but he too did not succeed as the musicians were up in arms against this new style and the princes and noblemen who were the patrons of music were not inclined towards any change. Sadarang now revived the *Kheyal*, improved upon it and gave currency to it in his war against the prevailing *Durbari* music.

Sadarang was really the honorific of Nyamat Khan, a descendant of Tansen's daughter who was married to one Misri Singh alias Naubat Khan, a great veena player and courtier of Akbar. Hailing from a family of veena players Sadarang excelled in the art and was without a rival in the realm. He was a musician in the court of Emperor Mohammad Shah, who has been nicknamed 'Rangile' for his knowledge and mastery of music and compositional abilities.

As a veena player Nyamat Khan had to accompany the vocalists of the court, as was the practice then, and therefore had to sit always behind the vocalists. He resented this and took two years' leave from the court. During this period he trained two beggar boys in an improved type of *Kheyal* singing, which he had innovated. These boys became master artistes. Besides possessing charming voices, they rendered the *Kheyal* as shaped by Sadarang so exquisitely and artistically that it soon caught the ears of the music lovers and through them filtered into the court. The Emperor invited these artistes to give a performance and he became so enamoured of the new style that he appointed them his court musicians.

Soon afterwards the Emperor learnt that these two musicians were the disciples of Nyamat Khan and that the new style

was the creation of his erstwhile veena player. Thereupon he invited Nyamat Khan to the court and gave him a seat by his side. Nyamat Khan no longer accompanied the vocalists but gave solo performances for the Emperor. Thus, for the first time, the veena came to occupy a position in the court in its own right. The Emperor conferred upon him the title of 'Shah', i.e., the Emperor of Music. He was also given a nickname, 'Sadarang', which means 'ever gay'. None before him, except Tansen and Misri Singh, had enjoyed such unique honour or raised the art of music to so privileged a position.

Sadarang has left behind hundreds of *Kheyal* compositions which excel Tansen's *Dhrupad* compositions if not in their poetic element at least in their charm. Tansen's compositions, as indeed all *Dhrupads*, are panegyric odes, 'strains of enthusiastic and exalted verse directed to a fixed purpose and dealing with one dignified theme'. Compared to this Sadarang's compositions of *Kheyal* are suggestions of a myriad subtle human sentiments—joy and sorrow, smiles and tears, which have something very distinctive, something that combine tonal and psychological element in a perfect pictorial blend. Two other famous composers of *Kheyal* are Adarang and Manarang, descendants of Nyamat Khan.

As the beauty of a good painting depends to a great extent upon proper colouring so does the studied use of tones and tonal shadings make for tender music.

And thus the *Kheyal* theme entered the musical arena and displaced the *Dhrupad*. Though in the beginning the *Kheyal* had the gravity and slow gait of the *Dhrupad*, yet it soon developed on its own lines in which there was 'primitive vision and technical perfection, a strange mixture of decorative stylisation with naturalism'.

It was an age of master craftsmen. Craftsmanship permeated into every phase of life. The buildings, ornaments, furniture, pottery, dress and every article connected with the life of the people were made by master craftsmen and were decorative and attractive. Music too could not escape this influence and we find the latter *Kheyal* style turned by the masters into highly decorative music.



Hindu art in general impresses us in mass, with its sublimity, strength and poise, while Mohammedan art specialises in grace and decorative details. *Dhrupad* is a good example of the former and *Kheyal* of the latter. With the cultural impact of the Muslims, Hindu music acquired a decorative element.

Art is not an isolated phenomenon. It is part of a general culture linked up with the history of the people. Therefore, the knowledge of history helps in the understanding of every national art and the study of art also helps in deriving certain historical conclusions.

The music of north India has become so rich and colourful because it assimilated what was best in Muslim music. This influence was responsible for substituting the outmoded *Kanakangi* scale by a natural one. Indian music drew freely upon the Arabic and Persian tunes, naturalised and synthesised them. This assimilation opened out a new field of immense potentialities for future creation.

Unique in its continuity, Indian culture is also remarkable for its capacity to expand from time to time. In fact its continuity is due to its power of absorption. Through the centuries it has received and absorbed many influences and ideas and yet remained distinctively Indian. A comparison of the early Muslim art with that of the Mughal period shows clearly how much India did to transpose the key, transmute the elements and recreate the assimilated ideas and motifs.

It has been found that each succeeding culture generally borrows several of the features from the preceding ones and recasts them in new moulds. So was it with the *Kheyal* which borrowed heavily from the *Dhrupad* in the course of its development. It took the *Alapa* which was the characteristic feature of the *Dhrupad* and punched it with words, calling it *Vistara* or *Barhat* (elaboration). It also took the *Meend* and *Gamak* of *Dhrupad* and by varying the emphasis and places of emphasis gave it the semblance of a new creation.

If we compare these two predominant styles of music, we find that the *Kheyal* 'seeks to overwhelm us by the profusion of form and excess of its material wealth', while the *Dhrupad* 'attempts to influence us with its bare content, economy of

material and the restraint on its modes of expression.' The latter leaves the greater portion unexpressed and conveys its message by barest lines of suggestions whereas the former carries the aesthetic experiment to its ultimate limit and seeks to express everything.

After the fall of the Mughal rulers the *Kheyal* lost its vital character. It may be said that it took to the ways that brought about the undoing of the *Dhrupad*. The grace and beauty of its performance yielded place to an emphasis on technique and it began to move within a circle of formalities and conventions, which did not suit the age of sportive and gallant men and voluptuous women given to feasting, drinking and leading a life of joyous worldliness, people who excluded everything that was serious and stern in life; men and women, sophisticated, elegant and refined, who made a cult of sensualism. And there appeared on the scene a class of composers who may be called the neo-Romanticists, who threw to the four winds all the prevalent musical formalities and conventions and introduced a new spirit and a new form in Indian music in the shape of the *Thumri*, sensual music which reflected the frivolity of the time in its excess of ornamentations and sinuous curves reminding one of the rococo architecture. It was perfect, very elaborate and sumptuous, like a Jain edifice where each piece of decoration and curve—a *tour de force* in its own way—is wonderful by reason of its lavishness but yet fails to give a wholesome cohesiveness to the overall design.

For a time the *Thumri* upset the complacency of the musical world. Here we find music trying to free itself from the shackles of the *Raga* conventions. The melody runs swiftly over the highways of sound, but not deeply. Melody is used here as a sort of narcotic to sweeten the senses and lull the intellect to sleep.

Though the *Thumri* soon captured the imagination of the people at large and elbowed out the *Kheyal* from its position of undisputed leadership, yet it is a decadent phase of music. It was a degeneration and yet like the sunset it was luridly glorious. Its time of birth coincided with the fall of the

Mughal Empire and the break-up of India into a number of small principalities which were a prey to petty jealousies, rivalries, fears and intrigues. *Thumri* lacked that secure, continuous and discriminating imperial patronage which contributed to the full development of the *Dhrupad* and the *Kheyal*.

The musicians who created the *Thumri* had to move from court to court, playing to the whims and caprices of scores of petty chiefs, and could not therefore devote the necessary time for its full development. Imaginative work there was, but no great ideas moved it and no great spirit inspired it. It soon lost its way in the swamp of tradition and sterile formalism.

Today all these forms of music are prevalent in the country. Each has its votaries and its own region of popularity, depending upon the social, religious and other traditions of the people. '*Alap, Dhrupad, Kheyal, Thumri, Dadra, Tappa*—it is a procession from the abstract and the divine to the concrete and the human, with the increasing prominence to the verbal. From the "classical" point of view it is decadence and regression; but if we look closely into the verbal texture, it is an enrichment of music by fresh content which, in terms of the common emotions of the daily living of men and women in the countryside, may sometimes be described as "literary", non-musical and impure, but which has sufficient musical appeal for the unsophisticated many.'

#### R E F E R E N C E S

1. Sadler: *Arts and Crafts of West Africa*
2. L. Adams: *Primitive Art*
3. Rosenthal: *Indian Music and Musical Instruments*
4. M. W. Mirza: *Life and Works of Amir Khusro*
5. Durand: *The Story of Civilisation*
6. D. P. Mukherjee: *Indian Music—An Introduction*

## 26. Music Looks Ahead

AFTER A CENTURY and a half of nurturing in English education and English ways of thought, we had lost for a while our understanding, sensitivity and feeling for things Indian. With the renaissance we began to take an interest in our arts, to patronise them and lift them out of neglect where ignorance had consigned them. Indian paintings and sculptures, not easily but steadily, began to gain adherents from the West as well as from the people of the country. But so far as Indian classical music was concerned, it remained out of our general understanding for a longer time, as the European critics and connoisseurs were not very enthusiastic over it; trained in the Western systems they found Indian classical music to be 'full of holes' due to the use of large numbers of quarter-tones.

The people of the country were not much interested in it either as, since the Muslim era, classical music had alienated itself from the life of the people and thrived under the patronage of the feudal lords and princes, catering only to their tastes. This neglect of the common people killed the popular appreciation of it; and with the coming of the British and gradual liquidation of feudalism and the change in tastes under the impact of English education, music soon began to consort with the unsavoury sections of society, who became its patrons and supporters, thus ceasing to be a respectable art.

Even the few solitary spirits who at this moment wanted to take an interest in it, revive it and restore it to an honoured place, found it to be an uphill task as its real appreciation

required a cultivated knowledge and training which the people lacked. When the handful of connoisseurs were just trying to understand the beauty and charm of classical music and educate the people upon its values—a slow process as they had been cut away from the very root of it for long—there appeared in the field the talkie with its own type of music.

This latter music was neither wholly Indian nor wholly European in conception or execution but a hybrid creation having roots nowhere. The absence of music in the life of the average Indian had created a vacuum; this film music was lilting, had the power of tickling the senses, and was easy to learn, requiring no special knowledge or training. Soon it filled the vacuum and the people responded to it with their usual tendency to satisfy their needs with the least possible exertions.

An impetus was given to it by All India Radio which was then starting its career under the alien rulers who cared little for the people or their tastes or the educative value of the art music. They subsidised this film music, gave wide publicity to it, ignoring Indian classical music completely. This gradually began to corrupt the tastes of the people.

For a comment on the effects of Indian film music, we might repeat what the noted critic, R. C. MacCarthy, said about Jazz. It is to be 'condemned from an artistic standpoint on the ground that it destroys a taste for better music and viewed psychologically it comes under a more serious censure. It provokes excitement, it stirs frivolous emotions of a kind that can readily pass over its sex-temptations. It steps up the speed of living which must be moderate, if it is not to shake us apart as a nation.'<sup>1</sup>

Some noble spirits such as Ananda Coomaraswamy, Bhatkhande, Tagore and Atiya Begum began to feel bitterly about this systematic demoralization of the Indian mind and drew the attention of the people to the harmful effects of this music, started educating them on the value of Indian classical music and preparing the ground for the art music to take its rightful place in their lives.

But there was a dissension. The people were not agreed on the form of the future music. According to some Indian classical music was already dead or dying and could not be revived. After years of discussion and controversy, three distinct viewpoints began to crystallize as under—and the differences have not yet been resolved.

Firstly, there are the moderns educated in English ways of thinking, aliens to their own culture, who are against all things Indian, who cry from the housetops that the days of revivalism are over and music worth its name should be revolutionary in its thought-content. They believe in expressing the contemporary complexes and conflicts of man. They belong to the inter-war generation suffering from sophisticated anguish and have lost all sense of old values and become disintegrated, losing all confidence in spiritual equipoise.

The loss of inner harmony makes all art very personal. It is no longer without the all-too-human blemish of symbolic ambiguity. If art can give the taste of the absolute—as the ancient philosophers believed—then we must say that modern art cannot do it.

To the inter-war generation the absolute is no more than a myth. The psychological transformation due to this lack of faith is profound. The first phase of this transformation is marked by excruciating spiritual travail; deprived of the absolute, the moderns fall back on man, and in the first shock of privation, human history dissolves into nothingness. Truth, goodness, and beauty become the figments of a lost childhood; human values become illegitimate constructions; progress becomes an absurd belief. No wonder there is a bewildering spate of cynicism in thought, conduct, and artistic endeavour. The moderns are left to stew in the juice of their newly acquired incertitude.

This so-called modern music has caught the imagination of the average people, but whether it is endowed with qualities of permanence remains to be seen. 'But it is fairly safe to assume that the true and lasting progress can and will **yet** be made along the lines of a reasoned expansion and modification of existing types . . . handed down to us from the

greatest classical masters [it] will yet be capable of adoption to the varying needs of today and tomorrow. He who lives will see: but it is certain that whatever new developments may await us the elements of form will be still fundamental. Its manifestations may and possibly will vary considerably from what we have been familiar with in the past; the need for consistent and logical design is, however, in the nature of things and cannot be set aside if a work of art is to make its appeal with its sense of conscious plan that differentiates it from the aimless wandering of the rhapsodist.<sup>12</sup>

Then there are those who take interest in everything that comes from the masses. They believe in building up the new music on the basis of folk art. In support of their contention they state that the study of the development of Indian music would clearly show that the classical music of this country is the result of a long process of collection and assimilation of folk music. It very frequently picked up the various provincial airs and tribal tunes in its long winding course, refined them, reshaped them, and after casting them in the classical mould incorporated them in the lore of *Raga* and *Ragini*. The names of *Ragas* such as *Behari*, *Jaunpuri* and *Sorat* afford ample proof of the correctness of their logic.

The history of music of almost all the countries bears testimony to the fact that no system of music can retain its vitality for long unless it is frequently enriched from other sources. Even as a river cannot course for long if it does not draw sufficiently from its tributaries music cannot survive if it does not draw copiously both in tune and style from folk music. Indian music with its long-living tradition continually drew from the prevailing folk airs; when it ceased to do so it ceased to be a living force.

To lend force to the argument, examples are cited of Russia and China today where the composers busy with creating new music build them on the basis of the existing folk styles.

But we have also to recognise the limitations of folk music. This will be clearer if we take to the study of the folk music of the various regions in India. We find a marked difference between the classical and the folk types. In folk music we

find the following characteristics.

There is an absence of tonal extension.

It is pivoted on a particular note or a group of notes.

It very seldom uses the two tetrachords at a time, and when it does, it is only an imitation of one tetrachord in the other.

The maximum number of notes used in it are the seven notes of a major scale with the addition of minor third and minor seventh, the use of the minors being less frequent.

An occasional higher enharmonic form is found occurring in the ascent and a lower one in the descent.

No single note receives any individual prominence either in duration or by stress.

Tones in it are used not to express any tonal moods of their own but only as pegs on which to hang the words.

The source of generating emotions in it lies in its theme rather than in the consonant or dissonant character of the notes. The scale is neither regulated nor fixed and if it employs any discord it is only to effect certain changes both in tonal loudness and pitch. Folk music no doubt has its twang, grace and charm. Some of its touches and turns are superb, its movement is easy and its artlessness highly appealing. But in the use of tones or the height and depth of feeling or the wide range of the use of graces, art music leaves it far behind.

The art music which has been built through the ages with the utmost care by the effort and skill of geniuses cannot be placed on the same footing with the music which has been created by ordinary men and women. In folk music neither is much importance given to the meaning of tones nor is their artistic effect extended because the music, which is a natural and unconscious development of both the bad and good musical idioms, has a free play of them. But in the art music everything has a studied use, nothing is left to whim or caprice or chance, aiming always at a studied musical expression and effect. That is why we find the shape and form of art music changing constantly with the discovery of new musical effects, phrases, idioms and scales, the old always being discarded and new ones installed.

Folk music is lively but colourless whereas classical music,



by its use of a greater number of tones, microtones, undertones, various kinds of time-measures and rhythms, possesses both liveliness and colour. The folk music is emotional and passionate, frank and forthright, because it deals with life and living. Classical music is cold and calculating because it deals with moods and sentiments. The former is plain but verbose whereas the latter is richly decorative but reticent.

The use of too many meaningful words in music is a great impediment to the tonal expression. The words tend to harm the progress of melody. Every art has its own vehicle of expression and symbolism. If music is an art distinct from poetry it too must have its own symbolism, and if it tries to express itself more diligently through words, it is no longer music. In music the words are simply vehicles of tonal expression carrying the melody and therefore should be at a minimum. But if, instead, they usurp the place of the melody irreparable harm will be done. Long ago Mendelssohn pointed out that the 'emotional content of a piece of music cannot be translated into words, not because music is vaguer and more indefinite but because it is so exact that it cannot be defined by anything so ambiguous as language.'

Each art should express its own innate glory by its own symbolism and should not borrow effects from other arts. Music overweighted with words becomes merely melodious poetry and in trying to express movement misses its true purpose and character. Tagore knew this well and that is why he said, 'Song is glorious in its own right; why should it accept the slavery of words? Song begins where words end. The inexplicable is the domain of music. It can say what words cannot, and so the less the words disturb the song, the better.'<sup>3</sup>

The other school of the traditionalists try to cling to all that is past and old without maintaining any relationship with life and social reality. They forget that in art, as in all other human activity, all that is old is not necessarily gold and all that is new is not necessarily modern. The traditionalists plead that the old classical music may have drawn deeply from the folk music but in modern times it would be a

regressive step to build new music completely on the basis of folk music as the rhythms and contents of the folk songs produced under rural conditions are disappearing now. And again: 'As for the accusation that folk songs belong to the distant past nothing could be more misconceived. As a matter of fact the most significant characteristic of folk art is its contemporaneity. Its appeal lies in its being rooted in reality and emotional unity of the artist and audience. Folk songs are as much expression of the peoples' hopes and struggles for a fuller life as of their joys and sorrows.' The recent popularity of folk songs is a sufficient reason for us to believe that they in no way lack in the richness of content, in freshness of tune and in novelty of rhythmic patterns. They are pregnant with new ideas.

The controversy can easily be resolved not by over-emphasis of the role of folk music or revival of the classical music or the experimentations of the modernists but by the recognition of the incontrovertible great truth which Kalidas uttered: 'Whatever is old is not necessarily good. All verses are not faultless; good literature follows a particular style discriminately, while the dilettantes follow the literary tradition without question.' The same is true of music.

The Indian mind was never a closed mind. It never followed tradition blindly but revolted against it whenever necessary. 'The existence of opposing forces in art, literature and philosophy is well established; how are we then to determine which is right and which is wrong?' asks Siddhasena Divakara, the great logician and poet of the fifth century A. D. For arriving at the decision, he asks us not to reject or accept anything without proper analysis.

It is true that the music has to be rooted in the national tradition if it has to retain its unique character. The duty of an age is not to reject the epos of the country, but to recover what is of permanent value, and to assimilate and develop its great potentialities. It should also be remembered that tradition is not a static entity. Not only does the present always live in the past, but the past always changes in the perspective of the present. The very process of the selection

of the past modifies it. There can never be a healthy tradition which does not allow experimentation and innovation. The only test is how far a particular experiment with new forms gives new edge and point to the content.

The problem of the future music has, therefore, become baffling. There are some great masters with us yet but none of them is gifted with the wide creative vision to put the old music on the new track. The new artiste, if he is desirous of being remembered, shall have to synthesise the traditional and the modern views.

The difficulty lies in the rigours of classical music. Tagore rightly felt that the traditional Indian music had reached the dead end of its perfection and reacted strongly against its technical virtuosity, created many tunes drawing freely from the classical and popular sources, modifying them and putting them on a semi-classical pattern. The charge that is generally levelled against Tagore is that he was an iconoclast who paid no respect to tradition as he did not know it.

On this point let us hear Tagore himself. He says: 'The rumour is that I am not acquainted with the Hindustani music, that I do not understand it even.... In my childhood and early age, I was accustomed to listen to that type of music which was not of amateurs, and therefore the rules and usages of the classical tradition found a permanent place in my mind... and its forms and aesthetics have found a permanent niche within me.... Because I have listened to it from my early childhood, I accept fully its glory and charm. Good classical music always overwhelms me deeply.'<sup>4</sup>

Again, when he was accused of distorting Indian music both in form and spirit he said: 'My early compositions in *Rag-Ragini* and in *Dhrupad* style await with full confidence the judgment of future historians of music. The people who fail to understand that I have drawn my inspiration from the classical music are themselves deaf to it.'<sup>5</sup>

One who analyses Tagore's contribution to music diligently will discover the following things about him.

He was not at all against the traditional music and had a deep knowledge of it. His innumerable *Dhrupad*, *Kheyal*,

and *Tappa* styles of compositions in the Bengali language illustrate his mastery over them.

His love for folk music was no less. In many of his compositions we find him punching classical tunes with folk airs. In many others we find the European tunes colouring them but it is done so skilfully and subtly that we find the indigenous musical ideal nowhere impaired. In a word it can be said that almost three thousand of his musical compositions are constructionally and melodically perfect. It is impossible to find such an ideal pursued anywhere by a single musician. When one analyses his melodies one hardly finds the use of foreign notes in the diurnal and nocturnal tunes or forbidden notes used in the songs expressing particular emotions. One may find in his compositions set in the *Bhairavi Raga* a shade of *Todi* or in the composition in *Asavari* a touch of *Bhairavi* but they are not as incongruous as the punching of *Bhairavi* with *Bhahar* or *Nata* with *Bihag*.

He knew well that our *Ragas* are not static but dynamic by themselves and therefore we find him often using *Komal Rishabha* with *Shuddha Rishabha* in the descent of *Asavari* without altering the *Raga* mood. In *Ramkali*, he often used *Shuddha Madhyam*, in *Poorvi*, *Shuddha Dhaivat*, in *Bihag*, *Komal Nishad* knowing fully well that two *Nishads* in it would bring the shadows of *Bihagra* to the fore—but he used them well. He not only knew the Northern Indian classical music thoroughly but also knew the variations it developed in Bengal following the traditions of Lochana, Damodara, Harinarayana and others. He knew that the *Vasant* of Bengal uses *Shuddha Madhyama* with *Shuddha Dhaivat* when the rest of India sings *Paraj Vasant* as *Vasant*.

Thus in his new *Ragas* we never find him using morning notes in the evening melodies or vice versa. Even in the composition of seasonal songs, so far as the use of the notes are concerned, we find him abiding by the injunctions laid down by ancient usages.

In Indian music, one finds the use of special groups of notes (*Pakads*) without which our melodies lose much of their peculiarities. Tagore was always conscious of their uses.

He followed the ancient *Dhrupad* composers fully in the style of compositions and most of his work has four stanzas as theirs had.

In the use of time-measures also, he blended many of them very skilfully and judiciously, thus creating many new ones, viz., *Rupakda*, *Navatal*, *Ekadasi*, and *Jhampak Tal* etc.

He reversed the 12/123/12/123 order of the division of *Jhaptal* as 123/12/123/12, which became his *Jhampak Tal*.

The Carnatic *Sartala* divisions helped him to create *Rupakda*, which is 3/2/3.

Again he broke the 5/2/2 divisions of Carnatic *Dushkara-tala* as 3/2/2/2, which in his hand became *Navatala*.

Following the *Mani*, *Vindu* and *Nila Talas* of the Carnatic system, he created *Ekadasi Tala*, the time-division of which is 3/2/2/4.

In these *Talas*, he completely ignored the places of waives which, he felt, would weaken the force of the movement.

It was also Rabindranath Tagore who first in our times tried his hand at synthesising the literary element with the melody proper and succeeded to a great extent. 'This fertilization of music by poetry everywhere aims at illustrating some more or less poetical ideas so as to enable them to leave a lasting impression on the human mind.'<sup>6</sup>

Again we do not find in his compositions either the tune impaired or the force of the words weak and halting, or the one dominating over the other or trying to put it to shade. They are well balanced and his music does not suffer the least in *Raga* outline. On the contrary, his music has much colour, truth and intimacy of expression and the abstract tune in his hand has become fully saturated with feeling and emotional fervour.

Since Tagore, this idea has gained further ground and the India of today has become a sort of a musical laboratory producing various types of musical forms, viz., *Bhavgiti*, *Raga Pradhan Sangeet*, *Kavya Sangeet*, light music, etc., which are all attempts to resolve 'the aristocratic functions of art and the democratic structure of modern society'. It is very difficult to say whether any of this will achieve permanence. 'Associ-

ated as they are always with some particular poetic thought or thoughts or seeking to portray some incident or incidents of life, they assume of necessity freer and more elastic forms than the prevalent ones and it is clear that some considerable modifications of the recognised forms must take place. If the modern man rejects the classical forms and tries to produce new ones of his own, it can only be because his ideas are not the classical ideas, and he must find the form most naturally propitious to them. But it must be remembered that such music, although claiming as a necessity a certain freedom of formal outline, must also satisfy our desire for artistic developments. In other words whether it be what we call absolute music unconnected with any idea external to itself or whether it seeks to illustrate some impression or story, it can never be formless; it must possess that sense of symmetry and fitness for its purpose without which it will fail as a work of art.<sup>7</sup>

Tagore, as one of the greatest creators of music in recent times, realised the value of art music in the context of the new creation, and we find him saying, 'In Indian music it is not possible to build anything on other than the *Raga* basis; we can run away from its fetters but not from its main outline.'<sup>8</sup>

The future development of Indian music thus depends on the development of the traditional idioms in the context of contemporary life and its experiences as well as fusion with folk music. 'Nothing can give more satisfaction and happiness than the culture of what is deeply related with our own soul, even if that relationship might have been forgotten for a time. We cannot be true internationalists without contributing to the world that which is most really of ourselves of which the music that grew out of the soil is a vital expression.'<sup>9</sup>

There is also another controversy raging around Indian music. This relates to whether Indian music can be successfully orchestrated in the Western sense without affecting its spirit. The protagonists are loud in their claim forgetting that the glory of Indian music and its appeal depend on the free scope of extempore improvisation which it allows as long as

it is spontaneous and does not become repetitive.

The beauty of Indian music can only be felt or created at the moment of its performance and, because of this freedom to embroider the theme in a variety of shapes, the music does not fit the framework of the art of orchestration. All experimentation in this direction under the auspices of All India Radio has been able neither to excite the interest of the lovers of Indian music nor to carry the people with it as the music played neither is Indian in spirit nor conforms to the basic principles of orchestra.

The *raison d'être* of harmony is dramatic affectiveness to obtain which many things have to be sacrificed, among them subtlety of melody, complexity of rhythm, and purity of the intervals between notes. All of these are altered, for technical reasons, including that of the 5th (between *Shadaja* [C] and *Panchama* [G]). This tempered scale will mean that the music could not be played against the standing note (as the *Ragas* are performed against *tambura*) in the absence of which it will be difficult to think of the survival of the *Ragas* except in their *Pakads*. But a *Raga* is so much more than its few melodic patterns and hence harmonization will only end in watering down our musical traditions.

Moreover for proper orchestration, problems of notation and music writing have to be solved since we have no perfect system of our own. Until recently music was unwritten here and was the sole concern of the musician who himself was the composer. Its culture and training were entirely his own charge and responsibility. It was handed from generation to generation, from master to disciple, by traditional, personal, oral instruction and there was no necessity for a notation. A system of music writing has been evolved but it will take a long time to develop for Indian music, by its very nature, is such that the inherent feeling behind the rendering of *Ragas* can only be understood by experience and cannot be written down.

And it is to be remembered that neither the mere ensemble of a large number of various plucked, bowed or percussion instruments playing one melody in unison nor three or four

instrumental choirs playing a melody in turn while the percussion instruments stress the rhythm go to make an orchestra. It requires the study of the pitch, loudness, and the intensity of the individual instruments, their overall tonal quality, and effects of each group on the other, uniform blowing of the wind instruments, uniform plucking and bowing of the strings and thumping of the percussions, analyses of the melody in relation to chords, contrapuntal and harmonic devices which are used in orchestra.

This is not possible with *Ragas* which consist of a theme on a fixed sequence of notes in ascending and descending order endowing a note or a group of notes with a magnitude and prominence in time and allowing spontaneous and free scope for embroidering *ad libitum* within the melodic framework, which the conductor or the instrumentalist in an orchestra is not allowed to do but play a set apart in a more or less set pattern.

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## 27. Indian Musical Instruments

THE MUSICAL instruments of India have a history as old as its music. References in ancient writings, specimens carved on the temple walls and the large variety used by the musicians even today testify to the creative genius of the people. Besides inventing many stringed, wind, and percussion instruments, the people have at various times assimilated many foreign instruments and improved upon them to suit their own needs.

The Indian mind has differentiated between vocal and instrumental music very cleverly. According to the texts 'the song has for its soul the sound which on the other hand is sustained by the instruments'.

We believe that the emotional effect of melody lies entirely in the words of the song, their meaning and vocal intonations. The instruments on the other hand only emit pure vowel sounds wherein lies absolute music; their ramifications in the rise and fall of pitch and their order are purely intellectual and hence music produced by instruments has been called 'dry instrumentalism'.

The ancients had felt the existence of no such thing as pure instrumental music as the music of the instrument had to be felt or rather made intelligible by reference to the voice which made it only an extension of vocal music.

Western music philosophers echo this very idea when they say that 'pure instrumental music is unable to render even the most ordinary feelings such as loyalty or anger unambiguously and distinctly by its own unaided power.'

Indian music, being vocal in conception, only prefers those instruments whose sounds could approximately resemble the human voice. 'The instruments must speak,' say our musicians. As long as the instruments fail to produce what the human voice does our musical texts do not attach much value to them and refer to them somewhat contemptuously as *Sushkam Vadyam* (dry instrumentalism).

Indian musical instruments have been classified under the following five heads by the ancient music scholars: *Tata*, *Bitata*, *Sushira*, *Anabadhva* and *Ghana*.

*Tata* are those instruments which use either strings or wires to emit sounds and are played with stroke of fingers or plectra.

*Bitata* are those stringed instruments which are played with the bow.

*Sushira* are wind instruments.

*Anabadhva* are those whose faces are covered with skin and are played either by hand or by sticks.

*Ghana* are those which are made of metals.

This classification is almost similar to the classification of musical instruments prevalent in ancient Greece and Rome.

Though there was an attempt to classify Indian instruments as drawing-room stringed instruments, outdoor ones and pastorals by the late Maharaja Sourindra Mohan Tagore (1886-1915), yet the old classification still continues.

Sarangadeva in his *Sangeeta Ratnakara* has classified the Indian instruments in four categories according to their uses: (a) *Sushka*—i.e. which are played solo (b) accompaniments for songs known as *Gitanuga* (c) accompaniments for dances known as *Nrityanuga* and (d) those that can be used both for accompanying songs and dances known as *Gita-Nrityanuga*.

As most of the instruments were conceived and designed as accompaniments—the range of tones of Indian musical instruments are generally  $2\frac{1}{2}$  octaves though by *Meend* (deflection) the notes up to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  octaves can easily be covered.

The historians of Western music have studied their instruments more thoroughly and have placed them chronologically according to their evolution. But unfortunately no such study

of Indian instruments has yet been made.

'Stringed [instruments] are prior to the wind [ones]', is an old adage current in the musical circles of India. Some people interpret it to mean that the stringed instruments were discovered first and the wind instruments followed them. According to our texts also, in the order of arrangement of musical instruments, the *Tata* come first followed by *Bitata*; next come the wind instruments followed by the metalled ones. The word 'first' (*Adow*) may have been used to denote the order of arrangement as well as the order of evolution of the instruments.

A seven-keyed flute denoting seven note-places along with a stringed instrument of the veena species and some other percussion instruments found in the Mohenjodaro and Harappa ruins prove that they were in use even before the Aryan people came to India. It also makes it difficult to conjecture whether the veena or the venu (flute) is the earliest of the Indian instruments.

When we come from this pre-historic period to the period of the *Vedas* and *Samhitas* we find both the veena and the mridanga mentioned therein. This leads us to believe that the mridanga was used for rhythmic accompaniment even at such an early period. In contrast to the veena, the venu is rarely mentioned in the *Vedas*. This is perhaps due to the Aryans not wishing to associate themselves with pastoral instruments.

*Rik Samhita* has been accepted as one of the earliest books. Here we find mentioned the names of various types of veena and their sizes. The veenas were named variously according to shape and size, viz., Shoni, Picchola or Picchori, Aghati, Ghatalika, Nadi, Vanaspati, Oudumburi, Kandaveena, Vana or Satatantri Veena, Karkari, Pinga, Apaghatalika, Aisiki and Kashyapi or Kacchapi. The shape and structure of the Kandaveena had raised some doubt among the scholars and some of them, led by Dr. Calland, explained it to be a bamboo flute whereas Sayana, the great Indian commentator, has termed it as Aghati Veena. Besides this, *Samhita* mentions Dundubhi and Bhumi instruments. Dundubhi is a Panab species of skin-covered drum-like instrument, perhaps the precursor of

the mridanga. Dr. Calland, in his translation of *Satapatha Brahmana*, has said that the 25th part of the *Brahmana* refers to certain types of Yagnas which when performed required the women of the priests' families to accompany the *Saman* chant with Picchori Veena. They either sat behind the altar and accompanied the *Saman* with the veena or danced in a circle around the *Vedi* (altar) playing the instrument. According to him Picchori is an instrument of the guitar type. It was played as the Sarod is nowadays, with the plectrum. Professor Keith too mentions it as Udumbari Veena in his *History of the Vedic Literature*. It was so called because it was made of *udumba* wood. Mahamahopadhyaya Ramakrishna Kavi, one of the most learned Sanskrit scholars of South India, has accepted these instruments referred in the *Vedas* as historical ones and has described their construction and structure. Vana or Satatantri Veena had, according to him, a hundred strings. It seems it used the guts of animals or the strings made of a certain type of grass, as wires of steel or copper were unknown at the time.

In *Naradi Shiksha*, a book written in the first century A. D., we find Narada equating the 'first note of *Saman* music with the second note of the flute and the second of the former as the *Gandhar* of the latter'. While trying to establish the relationship between the *Saman* music and the popular *Gandharva* music or *Deshi* one, Narada, author of *Shiksha*, has referred both to the veena and the venu. He has equated the veena with Vedic music and venu with *Gandharva* or popular one, thus giving the veena a hallowed place in the musical hierarchy of India.

Details about the musical instruments are very scanty even in Bharata's *Natya Shastra*. Bharata only refers to Chitra and Bipancha Veena, the former using seven strings and being played by the fingers, and the latter nine strings and played by the plectrum.

Next we come to the *Jatakas* or legends of the Buddha's previous births. In them we find frequent mention of the veena, the venu and the mridanga. The seven-stringed veena mentioned in *Natya Shastra* reminds us of the seven-stringed

Chitra Veena mentioned in the *Gupṭil Jataka* and was known as Bhramar Tantra or the drone string. We are reminded again of the seven-stringed veena by the sculptural reliefs of the instrument of Amaravati dating around the 2nd or 3rd century A. D. Here one finds the Buddha symbolized as an elephant, being carried in a procession surrounded by dancers and danseuses. One of the dancers is seen playing a seven-stringed veena resembling our present-day Sarod. Another name for Sarod is Svaraveena. Sitar, Rabab and Sarod etc. are all instruments of the veena species differing only in shape and structure. Narada, author of *Sangit Makaranda*, has referred to eighteen types of the veena, viz., Kacchapi or Kashapi, Kubjika, Chitra, Paribadini, Nakuli, Mahati, Jaya, Vaishnavi, Roudri, Barani, Saraswati, Kinnari, Kurmi, Sourandhri, Ghoshaka, Bhanati, Joshtha and Brahmi. Except for Mahati, Saraswati, Roudri and Kacchapi all these have passed into the womb of time. Kinnari is an instrument still used by some of the tribal people in India. Saraswati Veena is used in South India but Kacchapi Veena, though found in North India, is becoming rare. The veena, otherwise known as been (Mahati veena) in the north, is thus the most hoary instrument which has been referred to in almost all of our *Upanishads*, *Puranas* and Sanskrit dramas. Even in the olden times it had acquired such sanctity that Yagnavalkya, one of the foremost of ancient law-givers, says, 'He who knows the art of veena-playing and Shruti Shastra can attain God easily.' It is the most characteristic instrument of the nation. Its sound is thought to be closest to the human voice, capable of producing almost all its shades and variations.

### MAHATI VEENA

It consists of a bamboo piece or a hollow round sesame wood of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. diameter and is usually 3 ft. 7 in. long. The finger board is  $21\frac{3}{4}$  in. long beyond each end of which are screwed two large gourds—one fixed 10 in. down from the top and the other downwards at the distance of 2 ft. and  $11\frac{1}{2}$  in. from the top. The position of the stem between these two

gourds is called Asthan. Gourds are usually 14 inches in diameter. On the finger board 22 or 24 convex brass frets (*Sundaries* or *Saris*) are fixed by the player himself with wax which, when properly set, give various tones. If there is any difference in their pitch it can easily be corrected by the adjustment of the frets by the pressure of the finger. As the frets are  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in. in length fixed on the wax, this gives the finger board generally a width of 2 in.

The great peculiarity of this instrument is the height of the frets. The nearest to the nut is  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. and at the other extreme end is  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. and in between the decrease is fairly gradual. This arrangement enables the fingers never to touch the finger board.

In the upper end are seven pegs for fastening the wires which are held at the bottom end by a dainty little ornamented ivory peacock or a hook attached to the main staff. The strings are held at adequate distances by the pegs, in complement of which at the other end is placed the Jewari, i.e., a rest made with dents to hold the wires at desired heights so that the wires may never touch the frets and may be at a distance from each other.

There are four main strings for playing, which pass over the frets. These are played by the fingers of the right hand of the player while the left hand fingers touch the strings on the frets of the stem and pass round to produce different notes. There are also three side-strings, two on the right and one on the left of the instrument which are used for a sort of drone accompaniment to the main music. The strings of the veena are strained on the pegs. The main strings are supported by two bridges, the one on top called *Sarasvati*, and the other on the bottom called *Takhat*, on which a chiselled piece of ivory (*jewari*) is raised to give melodious vibrations to the sound of the strings. All the strings are attached at the bottom of the veena with a slanting piece of wood joined with the main staff which is called *Kara* or *Kakubha*. The four main strings are called: (a) *Nayaki* which is tuned in the note of *Madhyam* (F); (b) *Kharaj*, tuned in the note of *Mandra Shadaja* (C of the lower octave);

(c) *Pancham* (G) tuned in the *Mandra Pancham* (G of lower octave); (d) *Laraj* tuned in *Ati mandra Gandhar* (E of the more lower octave) or *Shadaja* or C. The side strings which have separate bridges are tuned in *Madhya* (Middle) or *Tara* (upper octave) C on one side and *Mandra Shadaja* (lower octave C) respectively. The veena is held over the left shoulder, the upper gourd resting on the shoulder and the lower gourd on the right knee. The frets are stopped with the left hand, the first and second fingers being usually employed (the third finger is seldom used) for moving rapidly over the frets. The first two fingers of the right hand are used to strike the strings on the finger-board and the little finger for striking the two side-wires for prolonging the note.

Only *Alap* consisting of 18 divisions is played on the veena.

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) <i>Asthai Varnam.</i>   | (10) <i>Thonk.</i>       |
| (2) <i>Antara Varnam.</i>   | (11) <i>Kattar Jhar.</i> |
| (3) <i>Sanchari Varnam.</i> | (12) <i>Ladi.</i>        |
| (4) <i>Bhog Varnam.</i>     | (13) <i>Lad-Gutha.</i>   |
| (5) <i>Abhog Varnam.</i>    | (14) <i>Lad-Lapet.</i>   |
| (6) <i>Barabar ki Jod.</i>  | (15) <i>Paran.</i>       |
| (7) <i>Gamak Jod.</i>       | (16) <i>Sath Sangat.</i> |
| (8) <i>Ladi Jod.</i>        | (17) <i>Dhua.</i>        |
| (9) <i>Jhala.</i>           | (18) <i>Matha.</i>       |

All these are played independently except the last eight divisions which are accompanied by the mridangam. The first five divisions of *Alap* follow *Vilambitlaya* (slow tempo) but without *Tala*, and the next three in *Madhyalaya* (medium tempo) and the last ten in *Druta* or fast tempo with *Tala* or beats.

### SARASVATI VEENA

This instrument is used in South India both as an accompaniment and for playing melodies independently. Instead of the natural gourd it possesses a gourd-shaped bowl carved out of wood with a small gourd on the upper side which gives

it a look almost like that of the ornamented sitar of North India. It has 24 movable frets fixed to the base, over which pass seven strings, four for playing and three for rhythm. The North Indian veena has a mellow and sweet tone which in the hands of an expert can produce a vigorous mood and atmosphere. The South Indian veena, on the contrary, is a little metallic and often not melodious. It is played like the sitar of North India.

### RUDRA VEENA

It is the same as Mahati Veena, but has only eighteen frets.

### RABAB

It is difficult to determine whether rabab is a foreign or autochthonous instrument. According to some it is the modified form of the older instrument, Rudra veena, which when it travelled westward came to be known as rabab. However, whatever its origin may have been this instrument underwent many changes at the hands of Seniyas or the descendants of Tansen.

Rabab consists of a large piece of hollow wood or stem supported at the bottom by a hollow circular wooden belly covered with the skin of a sheep. A wooden bridge is placed on the mid-belly and is known as Ghuraj Gain and another placed on the top is known as Tar-Gain. Both are meant to support the six strings. There are six pegs at the top to which the strings are attached and at the lowest portion of the bottom there are string holes known as Roda where all the strings meet. The sheep skin covering the belly of the instrument is called Mand and the portion of the body on which the left fingers play on the strings is called Asthan.

The six strings needed for playing the tunes are of gut, which makes the playing difficult. The strings are tuned from the other side of the player in the notes *G* of the Middle Octave or *Pa* (*Madhya Saptak*) [*D*] of the Middle Octave or *Re* (*Madhya Saptak*) *C* of the Middle Octave or *Sa* (*Madhya*



*Saptak*) [G] Bass or P (*Mandra Saptak*), E or F Bass or Ma or Ga (*Mandra Saptak*) and C Bass or Sa (*Mandra Saptak*). The strings are called Zir, Mian, Sur, Mandra, Ghor and Kharaj respectively.

The belly of the rabab is placed between the hips of the player and to rest the upper portion of the left shoulder a detachable wooden *tumba* (gourd) is sometimes fixed. A fish scale is tied on the third finger of the left hand with the help of a piece of string to stop the catgut of the instruments in order to produce the notes. It is played with a triangular wooden plectrum called Jaba.

The musical notes are produced by striking the Jaba held by three fingers of the right hand, viz., thumb, first and second fingers. The strokes are not like those used in other instruments because on the rabab they are upward and hence very complicated. While the Jaba strikes the strings the left finger covered with the fish scale presses on the strings over the finger board. During the playing of *Raga-Alapa* various musical embellishments, viz., *Ash*, *Gamak*, *Chhut*, are used. Sometimes *Chhapak* is used in which the left fingers render a soft blow on the string without using Jarab or Jaba. The sound of a drum is also produced when the left palm and the fingers beat the parchment stretched on the belly to express rhythmic movements of time-beats and its climaxes.

The sound of the rabab, not being metallic, produces a sound resembling the human voice. The rabab is capable of producing all the characteristics and peculiarities of *veena-alapa* and *tar-paran* which are the basis of *veena* music. There are, of course, differences in the instrumental presentation. For example, in *veena*, one has more scope for *Meend*, in slow tempo, whereas rabab cannot be played in a very slow tempo. More strokes are used on the rabab with fingers of the right hand than on the *veena*. Again during the whole course of *Alapa*-playing, the *Chikari* give continuous droning sound in the *veena*, but in rabab there is no *Chikari* and hence the string tuned on C or Sa is used to fill up the gap in the musical phrases.

The *veena* excels in slow and middle tempos and for playing

*Gamaka*, *Jod* and *Tar-paran*, whereas the peculiarity of rabab lies in the middle tempo and in playing *Lari*, *Jod*, *Paran* with drum beats.

The *Tar-paran* in rabab has its own charm and the effect of the drum sound is without parallel.

## SAROD

It is difficult to decide whether this is a foreign instrument or an acclimatised or autochthonous one. Millward in his book, *Artists in Unknown India*, writes of the arts of the Sabara tribe of the Deccan and gives an illustration of a type of guitar (which he called Swar-guitar), used by the tribe and which looked like a combination of the veena and sarod. According to Millward the word *Svara* is the vulgarised form of the word *Sabara*. We also find this Sabar-guitar figuring in the sculptures in Ajanta and Amaravati.

It looks like rabab and the lower portion is covered with skin and the upper portion with a metallic plate. It produces powerful vibrant tones and has a high quality of resonance. It is the best instrument for rhythmic music and suits a faster speed. It has twelve resonating wires running under four main wires, of which the middle two are of brass and the other two of steel. It is played with a triangular flat wooden or horn piece.

All the celebrated sarod players of this country follow the styles of rabab or sur-sringar in *Raga-alap*.

The disciples of Kukub Khan and Keramatullah Khan follow the rabab style on sarod while those of Wazir Khan follow the technique of sur-sringar.

## SITAR

Amir Khusru, who found it impossible to handle the veena for its complexity, was led to resurrect this old musical instrument and innovate it. Many are of the opinion that this is his invention and in proof describe it as Persian *ud* in shape and veena in principle, the difference being that its frets

are movable and hence adjustable. But the ancient Indian musical literature refers to a type of veena called Tritantri or the three-wired veena. The Persian word for three is *Seh* and Khusrau must have found some similarity between the vulgarized *Te*, meaning three, and the Persian *Seh* and called the instrument *Sehtar* instead of *Tetara*. (*Tar* means wire or string.) But like his innovation of *Kheyal* this instrument too underwent many changes, especially in the hands of the descendants of Tansen, before it could find a place in the family of classical Indian musical instruments. One of Tansen's sons migrated to Jaipur and in his family was born one Amrit Sen in the late 18th century who foresaw the future of this instrument. This master introduced three extra wires, thus raising the number of wires to six. He changed the system of tuning too. The first wire known as *Nayaki* or *Aggal* is of steel and is tuned to *F* (*Madhyam*) and the other two strings which are of brass came to be known as *Jodi* (pair) and are tuned to *C* and *F* respectively. The fourth wire which is also of brass and is a bit thicker than the other wires is tuned to *G* of the middle octave and thus the fourth and fifth wires have come to be known as the pair of fifths. The sixth wire is of steel and is tuned to the *C* of the higher octave and is known as *Chikari* which is used for *Jhala*. The first four wires are used for *Alap* and all the notes up to *Ati-Mandra* (lower bass) octave can be produced on them by deflection. Most of the *Gat-tora* or the rhythmic *Raga* score is played on the first *Nayaki* wire. Later another wire has come to be added, thus making them seven in all; of course this seventh is also for *Chikari* which helps the *Jhala* to be played louder.

All good sitars have sometimes from twelve to twenty wires running below the upper six or seven wires which are known as *Tarab* or wires of resonances tuned from *C* to *B* from the left; and another gourd is fixed on the upper part of the staff as is done in the veena. The first wire on the left is so flexible that by pulling it gradually four or five notes can be played in *Meend* (*Ligato*).

The small sitars can produce notes up to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  octaves and the bigger 4. The small sitar has 18 frets and the bigger ones

20. The big sitar has one pair of strings tuned to *C* instead of one and another thick brass wire is usually added as an extra which is tuned to *F* on which the lower octave note can be produced.

There are two styles of sitar-playing—one known as *Majid Khani* and the other *Reza Khani*. The *Majid Khani* style was introduced by one Majid Khan, a descendant of Tansen settled in Jaipur, and follows the *Dhrupad* style and lends itself to *Alap*. The *Reza Khani* style was introduced by one Reza Khan of Jaunpur and suits faster scores.

Both the sitar and the veena are played with plectra made of steel wire, known as *Mizrab*, usually put on the forefinger.

## SUR BEEN

It is like a big sitar without frets and its upper surface is covered with a metallic plate. It has four strings tuned from left as *Sa, Pa, Sa, Ma* and below them are found seven resonating wires. It is played by rolling a rod of ebony over the wires, which act as frets, and striking them near the bridges. A similar instrument in vogue in South India is called *Gottuvadyam* because in the olden days the horn (*Kotu* in Tamil) of an antelope was used instead of this rod of ebony.

## SUR SRINGAR

It was Jafar Khan, another descendant of Tansen, who invented this instrument in the early part of the nineteenth century and set it in vogue. Once he and his cousin Nirmal Shah had to demonstrate their skill on the rabab and veena respectively at the court of Banaras. After Nirmal Shah had done so, it was Jafar Khan's turn to play. It being the rainy season he found his instrument covered with hide and played mostly on catgut which, being damp, would not emit good tones. His position became awkward in the soiree as Nirmal Shah and he had always been competitors for leadership in the world of Indian music.

He took a month's time from the Maharaja of Banaras, promising to demonstrate his art at the end of it. During this period he came and stayed with an instrument-maker of the city and evolved a new instrument on the basis of the rabab. It was rabab-like in shape but instead of the skin covering the lower portion a thin metal plate covered the whole upper surface and instead of the silk chords and catgut used in the rabab, steel and brass wires were put into use. This change breathed a new life into the instrument. Compared to the veena the tones of the new instrument were louder but sweeter and better than the rabab which was harsh. Both techniques of veena- and rabab-playing could be used on this instrument not only successfully but to the best advantage of the player.

### BOW INSTRUMENTS

They are so called because of the excitation of the strings of this class of instruments by a horse-hair bow which is made sticky with resin to set the strings in steady periodic motion. These have been admitted to be instruments of Indian origin by many local and foreign scholars. Galpin writes: 'The origin of the violin bow has been and is still a constant source of discussion, but it is becoming more and more evident that not to Germanic peoples, as has been recently suggested, but to India we owe its existence.' M. Senart has this to say: 'This does not admit of a moment's doubt, as the instruments are actually in existence bearing unmistakable marks of their Indian origin.' By 'instruments' he meant all the species of the bow instruments including the violin, the proud possession of the musical West. The same is the opinion of Dr. Sachs and a host of other writers on the evolution of the bow instrument.

### SARANGI

Among the bow instruments of India, the sarangi occupies a very important place. It is a very popular accompanying

instrument which very easily lends itself to imitation of the human voice (especially a woman's voice). It has usually three main strings which are of guts varying in thickness and one of brass and sometimes eighteen sympathetic wires running under the main strings and producing rich vibrating tones. The upper wires are tuned to *Sa, Pa, Sa, Ga* or *Ma* (*C, G, C, E, or F*) respectively. No pressure is applied on the strings but the stopping is produced by sliding the fingernails against the sides of the string while bowing.

It is generally two feet long and sometimes a little longer. Its shape reminds one of the guitar but the lower portion is covered with skin. The strings are tied to a hook below and the other ends, being tied to the pegs on the upper end, vary the tension when screwed but not the vibrating length. It is played as a violin inverted, with bow. The Indian bow differs from the Western bow used in playing the violin. It is convexly arched inwards towards the hair like the archer's bow.

The bowing technique 'with its many refinements and devices' invented by many masters has been 'responsible for the distinctive character of string-playing—its sustained singing tone, its extreme sensitiveness to the sliding of the fingernails and consequent dynamic range, its mercurial response to the slightest nuance of expression, its rhythmic energy derived from the to-and-fro motion of the bow across the strings. Up-bows and down-bows differ in attack; the tremolo produces quick reiteration of the same note or notes in an excited manner by means of rapid oscillation of the bow; phrasing is shaped by grouping notes together in one pull of the bow or by detaching a single note and giving it a stroke to itself. This little catalogue does not exhaust the resources of this instrument for exciting sound waves from strings, resources which are astonishingly large and varied and of extreme subtlety.'

The speciality of the bow instrument is that when the bow is applied to the string the pushing and pulling are continuous and the tones are sustained. The resin on the bow sticks to the string and pulls it to one side until the tension of the

string overcomes the friction of the bow and the string slips. It rebounds just on the plucked instruments but on its return journey, as the tension of the string wanes, the bow pulls again at the string, causes the vibration to continue undiminished, thus maintaining the vibrations and the volume of the tone. This is not possible in the plucked instruments.

### ESRAJ AND DILRUBA

The lower portion is like sarangi and upper portion like a diminutive sitar with frets. They are played with the bow. They have four main strings, two of brass and two of steel, tuned to *Sa, Pa, Sa, Ma* and seven sympathetic wires running under them. The difference between Esraj and Dilruba is that the latter is a little bigger. They are both Muslim innovations from sarangi. During the Muslim rule, when the women in the harem took to singing, they could not be accompanied by the sarangi players who were mostly men. Women could not take to the sarangi as it was not only a difficult instrument but also spoilt the beauty of the nails. So the upper portion of the sarangi was lengthened to some extent and frets were fixed on it numbering from 15 to 17 according to their size.

### TAOOS

It is just like the Dilruba. Its lower portion is shaped like a peacock which in Persian is called *Taoos*, from which its name is derived.

The method of sound production is common to the whole string family—in which strings are stretched on a bridge over a resonating soundboard. The tension of the string is varied to produce the notes of different pitches and the instruments are tuned by screwing the strings up and down on pegs, varying their tension though not their vibrating length. Length and tension are the interlocking factors governing their pitch.

The difference in tone production between plucked and bow instruments is that in the former there is only the initial

impulse imparted to the string and as the vibrations decrease in amplitude though not in frequency the sound dies away. But the action of the bow being continuous the sound never fades until the bow is completely stopped.

The correct tuning by which the expression of an Indian *Raga* can be delineated is always a descending scale. When *Ragas* have a difference of *Shrutis* in the ascent and the descent, which is not provided by the instruments, the scale tuned for descending enables the player to play the ascent too. But it should be noted that the instruments tuned in the ascending scale can never be used for the descending.

The fretted stringed instruments or other tunable keyboard must in the very beginning be set to the proper and correct intervals or *Shrutis*.

### SHEHNAI AND NADASWARAM

Both of them are the most highly developed reed instruments, the former being a little shorter and in vogue in the North and the latter longer and used in the South. Their *embouchure* consists of double pieces of reeds resembling that of a bassoon but rather roughly made, wider in proportion to its length, and mounted like that of an oboe on a short metal staple, which is fixed into a long cylinder enlarging downwards and looking like a cup or a bell. They are sometimes made of wood or metal which affects its tone.

As one blows air rapidly into the reeds the air passing through them makes the aperture close and open which gives an incisive character to the tones rich with upper partials and endows it with a capacity of considerable gradation of tone which is not found in the flute. The bell and the bones of the instrument no doubt produce their effect by influencing the partials without in any way making any difference—unless they are of metal—to the vibrating air-column inside. But when the encasing material is other than wood it vibrates on a frequency of its own which coincides and reinforces some of the higher frequencies of the vibrating air column thus changing the character of the tones. This property of the



instrument common in the sarangi, violin, the human voice, shehnâi and nadaswaram is known as *formant*.

The shehnai has usually seven holes and the nadaswaram twelve bored on one side of the cylinder in a line at intervals roughly corresponding to one of the Indian scales but the players often produce other and additional intervals by allowing the fingers partially to cover the holes. The upper seven are used in fingering, but the extra five in the nadaswaram are stopped or waxed at the discretion of the performer to regulate the pitch of the instrument.

The nadaswaram is played in a high pitch often making a shrill piercing sound and is meant to be heard from a distance. The shehnai, on the contrary, is played in a medium pitch and is therefore more melodious.

### BANSARI

The bansari (flute) is one of the most ancient Indian instruments with a pastoral association. It was used as a *drone* by the Aryans even before they took the tambura from the indigenous people and adapted it to their music. There are two kinds of flutes in use—the transverse and the fipple or vertical one of which the former seems to be the older.

A hole of  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. in diameter is bored about 2 or 3 in. down from one end and is the *embouchure*, a technical name for the mouthpiece of all wind instruments. It is played by holding it across the mouth, the *embouchure* touching the very centre of the lower lip and a series of six or seven holes pierced in a line with the centre of the *embouchure* is held so that they may come under the finger pads of the three main fingers of each hand, supported by the two thumbs below.

In the beginning it must have been quite a difficult problem to find the proper places for these tone holes of precise diameter fitting the finger pads of a normal pair of hands exactly to produce the notes of correct diatonic scale. It was by trial and error that the various claims—the optimum length, the dimension of the bores, the diameter of the finger holes, the placing of the *embouchure*—were resolved so satisfactorily as to give the best possible tone quality, the most

possible evenness to hole range, the most correct intonation and the greatest ease in fingering. The mutual adjustments of the contradictory claims, musical, physiological and mechanical, have been the musical instrument-maker's problem everywhere in the beginning.

For sounding the lowest note *Sa (C)* all holes have to be closed. Six finger holes thus give one octave of the scale. Another octave is obtained by over-blowing which encourages the air-column to break up fractionally according to the laws of harmonic series. Thus by changing the *embouchure* position, which is done by contracting the lips in such a way as to enable the player to direct a narrower stream of air against the hole, is obtained the first harmonic in place of the fundamental of the pipe. Increasing the admixture of tones (a subsidiary series of vibrations that adulterates the tone of the flute) makes it difficult for a person to play it softly. Aided by fingering this helps him to break up the pipe into small fractions and produce other notes and the additional intervals make it easy for him to play the melody.

The straight or fipple flute has a lip or edge shaped like a broad quill. It is done by sharpening one end of a hollow bamboo or reed of one and a half feet long as if it were a broad reed pen and inserting a thin bamboo piece or reed so as to leave a thin aperture to catch the breath and set up the right kind of disturbance in the tube to issue later as musical notes by closing or opening with the fingers the series of holes bored in a line on the other end. Except for the construction the principle involved in this is the same as governs the transverse flute.

However, like all instruments, it has its limitations; though its range is two octaves, yet the flute is an ideal musical instrument in the hands of a master. Nobody can question its sensuous quality and the beauty of its utterances, its delicacy and the forceful impact of its emotional appeal. But by itself it is incapable of building a vast tonal architecture or revealing the larger panoramas of musical design. In order to do this, it has to be supported by another instrument or other instruments.

## MRIDANGA

The mridanga is an ancient and important musical instrument used for keeping time and rhythm and continues to be used for the same purpose both in North and South India today; in the north it is used only as an accompaniment to the veena and the *Dhrupad* and *Hori-Dhamar* styles of singing—the other types of vocal music and instruments are accompanied with tabla—but in the south it is used for accompanying all types of music.

The mridanga, meaning 'earthen body', is also called *pakhawaj* (Pucca Awaj, or pure sound). It is shaped like a barrel whose left head is a little smaller than the right hand one, over each of which a goatskin shorn of its hair is fixed with the help of rings (*Gajra*) made by plaiting thin straps of leather. These two rings in their turn are again braced V-wise, with a leather strap across the barrel through which are passed small round blocks of wood (*Mutthi* or *Gatte*).

Three-quarters of the middle of the parchment on the left is pasted with iron filings mixed with some sort of gum and black soot about  $1/6$ th of an inch thick to form a circle.

On the right-hand face some dough is pasted to lower the tone as desired and add to the resonance. Both faces are tuned in unison and, when accompanying instruments, are tuned in *Panchama*. This is done by tightening the brace and moving the wooden blocks on the right side, sharpening both the ends simultaneously. Moved leftwards they lower the pitch.

## TABLA

About the origin of the tabla many a guess and conjecture, fable and legend fills the air. Modern Hindu revivalists are happy to say that the tabla has been derived from *pakhawaj* because the former looks like two parts of a mridanga cut apart. Many Muslim hereditary tabla-players, on the other hand, are never tired of repeating that the tabla originated in their families. But history has a different story altogether.

Since long before the Muslims rechristened the mridanga as

pakhawaj and, indeed, long before the birth of Islam, the tabla occupied a prominent place among the musical instruments of Arabia. In pagan Arabia it was a popular instrument but was somewhat different in structure. When we study the history of the tabla from that time to the present day, it becomes more difficult to attribute the origin of the tabla to pakhawaj. The notion of the derivation of the tabla from pakhawaj has come to be believed because the scores of the latter can be easily played on the former and also because of a somewhat constructional similarity between them.

On many temple walls we find musical instruments like the tabla and the bayan depicted. It can therefore be said that they were not a later derivation from pakhawaj but had a parallel and independent growth of their own.

In ancient Arabia the *duff* was the most popular among all leather-covered percussion instruments. The duff is an instrument of the tambourine class. It is said that one Tubal, son of the musician Jubal of Arabia, was the inventor of both the duff and the tabla.

This tabla seems to have been in the beginning an instrument which suited the lighter variety of music and hence was very popular with the womenfolk of Arabia. We are told that the women of Mecca played the tabla along with the duff, the former being quite longish in shape but having a round face like the latter. 'The tabla or the long-shaped tambourine is mentioned as being used by the ladies at Sheikh Mehmood and elsewhere,' writes a historian of Arabian music.

From a careful study of the history of music and social development in Arabia we come to know that the duff and the tabla variety of instruments were commonly used in Mecca. In the stories of the *Arabian Nights* we find the names of various kinds of musical instruments mentioned, among which a longish type of musical instrument of the duff variety, known as *tar*, is found, which, we are told, was current in Yemen in the twelfth century.

Gradually the tabla type of instrument became so very popular that later it came to connote the drum family proper.

The word *Tabl* came to be used as a prefix to other drum instruments, viz. *Tabl-Nakada*, *Tabl-al-Markab* (kettle drum), *Tabl-Ta-oeel* (long drum), *Tabl-al-Mukhannat* (hour-glass shaped drum). Of these the *nakada* became very popular in India and it is said that Emperor Akbar was expert at playing on it.

It seems that the Muslims must have brought with them their favourite *tabl*. But here in India they found the percussion instruments varied and well developed. So they improved their own *tabl* on the lines of Indian varieties, and laid the basis for a new type of instrument to which they added a smaller variety of the duff which, because of its similarity with the *tabl*, was known as *tabla*, and the latter *bayan*. We do not know for certain whether anything like the *bayan* was used by them along with their *tabl* before they came to India.

Though *tabla-bayan* has been in use since the Muslims settled in India, we do not find any reference to it in the medieval musical literature even though the *mridanga* finds constant mention. The *mridanga*, being grave, suited the court music. Perhaps the *tabla-bayan* lacked the gravity necessary to accompany the type of music then prevalent. Had it been derived from the *pakhawaj*, certainly it would have been mentioned in the medieval texts but being an accompaniment used by women or used for the lighter type of music it does not find any reference. The *tabla* is almost a *pakhwaj* cut apart in the middle with the two parts having closed wooden bottoms. The left-hand one looks like a giant tea-cup and the right-hand one a giant coffee-cup having like the *pakhawaj* its head covered with skin. The right-hand one is braced and wedged similar to the *pakhawaj* with the help of a small ring made of a leather strap wound round two or three times. The left-hand one possesses no wedge but each of the two V-wise braces towards the top are often ringed.

The right-side one is called the *tabla* which has three-fourths of its top pasted with iron filings-cum-gum and soot like the *pakhawaj*, forming a circle. The leather piece with the black marking is called *pudi*. But in the left-hand one,

called bayan, the paste is put in a concentric circle lying, when played, just under the tip of the forefinger. The black circles are also called *ankhs* or *syahi*. The white space between the *ankh* and the ring of the tabla is called *warak* or *chanti*. The space between *ankh* and *warak* is called *lab*. The small leather ring placed at the bottom of both tabla and bayan through which the leather strap passes to hold the *pindi* and *gajra* is called *gudri*.

Both the mridanga and tabla are based on the same principles and played almost in the same manner, the difference being only in the structure of the instruments. The two faces of the mridanga are, as in the case of the tabla, set up on two separate small drums instead of being fixed in one. The right-hand note on the drum or the drumhead is where the keynote of *Shadaja* lies and the left-hand one is tuned to *Panchama*. The tuning of the drum to the exact *Shruti* or pitch of the stringed instrument or voice is of paramount importance and even a little difference spoils the music.

The stringed and wind instruments and human voice are similar to a great extent because they have the same sound effects which depend on (1) the quality of the sound, (2) the components of the sound, i.e. tones, (3) the combinations of sound units and (4) the rhythm. But the percussion instruments with skin covers have no tonal variations in the proper sense of the term. In their case the sound units in their various combinations somehow make for the absence of the tones. As all these types may have variations in sound and rhythm and because they may suggest a musical meaning with the help of their particular alphabets each of these types is capable of furnishing enough material sufficient for good musical compositions (*Prabandhas*). In ancient days the instrumental compositions had stages of progression, i.e. sections (*Dhatus*) named *Udgraha*, *Melapaka*, *Dhruva*, *Antara* and *Abhog*. They had tonal units (*Varnas*) combinations, rhythmic complexities and tempo adjustments similar to those of vocal music. The *Sthayee*, *Arohi*, *Avarohi* and *Sanchari Varnas*, of course, were absent in the percussion instrumental composi-

tions because they lacked voice registers but had their own variety of embellishments.

With the changes brought about in the matter of progression of vocal compositions during the Muslim rule, the arrangements in the instrumental compositions also changed. The old sections (*Dhatus*) lost their old nomenclature with the old ways remaining to some extent under different names. In the skin-covered instruments their very order—and even their existence—became defunct.

The stringed instruments now have *Sthayi*, *Manjha*, *Antara*, *Sanchari* and *Abhog* sections. Usually, however, only *Sthayi*, *Manjha* and the *Antara* sections are played and *Jod* or *Toda* in place of *Sanchari* and *Abhog* is followed by *Druta Jod*, i.e. *Alankar*, *Tan* and *Jhala*. Rabab, sursringar and sarod seldom follow this plan. They only use *Alap*, *Alapti* and *Tarparan*.

The tones *Sa*, *Re*, *Ga* etc. are produced on stringed instruments by striking the string inwards or outwards with fingers with the plectrum or with bow. The strokes have their particular names which may be called instrumental syllables comparable to the letters of the Alphabet. The first letter is known as *Daa*, the second produced by a stroke in the opposite direction as *Raa*, the mixed medium-paced as *Daa-Raa* or *De-Re*; the mixed fast-paced as *Di-Ri*, while the mixed rhythmic ones as *Daar*, *Draare* etc. On the instruments played with fingers and bow the first letter is produced by striking or rubbing the string inwards while those played with plectrum direct the first stroke outwards—so that what is *Daa* with the former becomes *Raa* in the latter.

In a *Prabandha* these syllables are used to signify the tones. The *Prabandha* in instrumental language is known as *Gat* meaning the instrumental song or tune. The term may have come from *Geet* (Song) or *Gati* (movement).

Wind instruments have no strokes and therefore no letters of their own. They play only the tones and therefore their compositions are in every way imitations of vocal music.

## STYLES OF TABLA-PLAYING

There are various styles or schools of tabla-playing deve-

loped by different families at different times which are known as *baj*.

The tabla as a main accompaniment has a background as old as the *Kheyal* styles of singing. The *Kheyal* being a softer and mellower type of singing compared to the *Dhrupad* required such a percussion accompaniment as was softer in nature and sweet in character. Rather than the grave and sonorous accompaniment of the *pakhawaj*, the masters of old bestowed a special care on the development of the tabla accompaniment as an art by itself. The first known master who succeeded in this was one Kallu Khan of Delhi. From him and his descendants the other people learnt the art of tabla-playing and some of them became masters in the art and by their own efforts and genius developed different schools. Because this style makes use of the middle finger most it is able to produce soft and delicate *Bols* and as these are produced more from the edge or *Chanti* than the middle part as in other styles, this style is also called *Kimare ka Baj*, or the style of playing on the edge.

This style prefers and gives more importance to *Peshkar*, *Kaida* and *Rela*. Small *guts*, *Mohras*, are its forte. In the compositions of this style *Tit* or *Tirkit*, *Din*, *Din-gin*, *Dhin-gin*, *Dhinnak* produced by a single finger are used more often than others.

### THE LUCKNOW STYLE

The Lucknow style has its origin in the Delhi style which was introduced in Lucknow by Bakshu Khan and Modu Khan. Both of them brought the style and its principles from Delhi but the musical environment of Lucknow soon influenced them. The things that influenced the original style most were the *pakhawaj* and the dance styles there prevalent. Gradually the Lucknow style began to separate itself from its parent, the Delhi *Baj*, by adopting more of the *pakhawaj* style of playing, i.e. by slapping the eye with the forefinger which gave it a sonority. Moreover this style is dominated by the use of *Gat*, *Tukda*, *Paran* and *Chakradhar Gats*.



### THE AJARDA STYLE

Kallu and Miru Khan of Ajarda who learnt the art of playing on the tabla from Ustad Sitab Khan of the famous Delhi school gave currency to this style of playing. Besides having the niceties and specialities of the Delhi style, viz. the importance of fingering on the edge and more use of *Peshkar*, *Kaida* and *Rela*, it also began to make more use of *Paran* and *Tukda*.

Its characteristic feature is the use of special groups or series of *Bols* which are perfect synthesis of the *Bol* emitted by tabla and bayan, viz. *Dhena*, *Dhardha*, *Dhadhirag*, *Dhindhing*, *Dhatak Dhetak*, *Dhenak Tinna*, in which one finds the *Bol* from both the drumheads happily blended. As this style is mostly played in a cross rhythm many people call it *Dedi Kaharva* or the one-and-a-half-times-*Kaharva* style.

### THE FARUKABAD STYLE

The style was brought from Lucknow by one Haji Vilayat Ali who married the daughter of Ustad Bakshu Khan, the noted tabla-player of Lucknow. It was later developed by him and his descendants. Besides possessing all the elements of the Lucknow style it specialises in a certain way of composing the *Gats* known as *Tipalli*, *Chowpalli*, etc.

### THE BANARAS STYLE

One Pandit Ram Sahay of Banaras learnt playing on the tabla from Ustad Madhu Khan of Lucknow and later gave the style a new tang. Besides possessing all the elements of the Lucknow style it puts more emphasis on *Gat*, *Paran*, *Chanda*, *Laggi* and *Ladi* than on *Peshkar*, *Kaida* and *Rela*. Instead of starting solo with *Peshkar* the players of Banaras start with *Utthan*, meaning 'rising'.

### THE PUNJAB STYLE

This style did not have its origin in the Delhi school but developed independently as a derivation from pakhawaj play-

ing. One Ustad Fakhir Baksh, instead of using the 'open' (*Khula*) *Bols* of the pakhawaj or tabla used them as 'closed' (*Bund*) ones and developed a new style. This has all the characteristics of the pakhawaj. The *Duggi* or the left-hand drum is often covered with dough.

In the Delhi *Baj* most of the *Kaida* completes its circle on the fourth *Matra* even when played slow or *Vilambit*, whereas the *Kaida* of the Punjab style is often very long—even in the *Vilambit* it completes the circle in 16 *Matras*. Besides this style excels in playing long *Gats* and *Parans* in different *Layas*. It specialises in a type of *Chakradhar* in which one *Avarta* of *Chakradhar Trital* is of 21 *Matras*; a half *Matra* is repeated twice thus enabling one to arrive at the *Sam* of the four circles. Even when played in the slowest rhythm it completes its circle correctly. In the eastern, i.e. Lucknow and Banaras styles, one *Palla* of *Chakradhar Paran* is either sixteen or nine *Matras* which reach their *Sams* in *Madhya* and *Drut Laya*. All the *Talas* of the Punjab are improvised like *Teental*. The *Bol* of the Punjab style has been much influenced by the local dialect.

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